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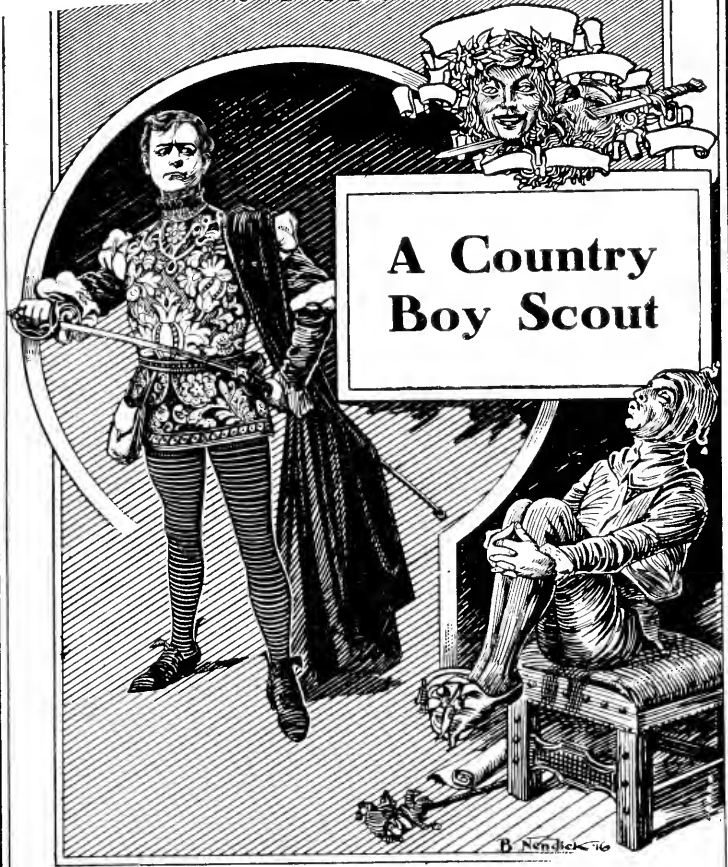
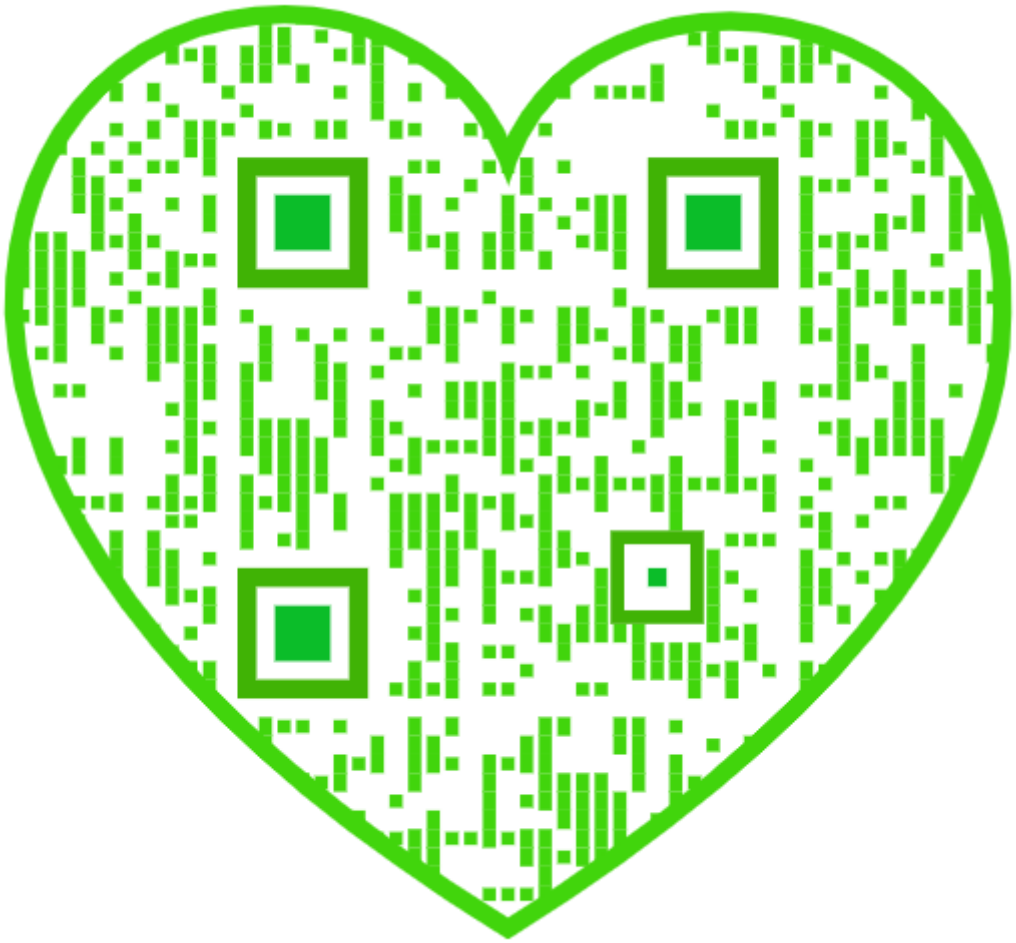


A Country Boy Scout

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS CHICAGO



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A COUNTRY BOY SCOUT

A COMEDY DRAMA FOR BOYS

IN THREE ACTS

BY

WALTER BEN HARE

AUTHOR OF

"Aaron Boggs, Freshman," "Abbu San of Old Japan," "Civil Service," "A College Town," "Deacon Dubbs," "A Bird in the Hand," "The Fascinators," "Laughing Water," "Macbeth à la Mode," "Mrs. Tubbs of Shantytown," "Kicked Out of College," "Parlor Matches," "A Poor Married Man," "Rose o' My Heart," "A Rustic Romeo," "Sewing for the Heathen," "A Southern Cinderella," "Savageland," etc., etc.

CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

A COUNTRY BOY SCOUT

CHARACTERS.

HUCKLEBERRY..*Aged Fifteen, the Worst Boy in the County*
PINKY PINFEATHERS.....*A Black Roustabout*
JUDGE TOLLIVER.....*The Owner of the Coal Mines*
MR. MCCLOSKEY.....*Manager of the Supply Store*
NORMAN TOLLIVER.....*Aged Sixteen, the Judge's Son*
MOE SKINSKY.....*A Hebrew Crook from the City*
WUN LUNG LOO.....*A Chinese Laundryman*
FLAPJACK .....*Aged Fifteen, Huck's Chum*
TUBBY TIMMONS.....*Aged Fourteen, a Musical Genius*
MICKY MALONE.....*Aged Thirteen, a Little Hunter*
SQUIRMY BEAN.....*Aged Fourteen, a Little Water Rat*
BUSTER BROWN.....*Aged Fifteen, with an "Eddication"*
FRECKLES KLOSSON.....*Aged Thirteen, a Breaker Boy*
LENGTHY SMITH.....*Aged Sixteen, One of the Gang*

Breaker Boys, Boy Scouts, Etc.

ACT I—The Supply Store at the Coal Mines. Rough-house Baseball in a Grocery Store. The Judge Gives Huck a Chance.

ACT II—Same Scene. A Barrel Full of Ghosts. Trapped.

ACT III—Same Scene. Boy Scout Song and Drill. Old Glory.

PLACE—*A Small Coal Mining Settlement in Pennsylvania.*

TIME—*Present Day.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About Two Hours.*

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1916

STORY OF THE PLAY.

A Country Boy Scout was written to exploit the aims and advantages of the Boy Scouts of America, but the play is suitable to any organization of boys, boys' schools, Sunday School classes, etc. The play is full of action and excitement and teaches an excellent moral lesson. No boy is really a bad boy, he is simply in a bad environment. Given the average "bad" boy, or group of bad boys, and place them in the right environment and they will develop into sturdy, upright, honorable boys, the forerunners of the coming great men of the country.

The story concerns a group of boys working in the coal mines in a small settlement in Pennsylvania. They are called bad boys, and their leader, Huckleberry, has achieved the unenviable reputation of the worst boy in the county. Judge Tolliver, the owner of the coal mines, decides to place his son Norman in charge of the supply store at the mines, to win him away from the temptations of the city. Huck is hired as a clerk in the supply store and, although he is full of mischief and nearly wrecks the supply store with a game of baseball, the Judge gives him his chance and he develops into an honest, straightforward lad, a typical Boy Scout.

Norman is in the clutches of a loan shark, one Moe Skinsky, and has stolen twenty dollars from the cash drawer of the supply store. Skinsky arrives and forces Norman to assist him in robbing the cash drawer, but Huck, with his ever faithful negro friend, Pinky, thwarts the money lender by placing a steel skunk trap in the money drawer and catching the real thief.

Wun Lung Loo, the Chinese laundryman, is the victim of most of the practical jokes of the breaker boys in the mines, but he neatly turns the tables on Huck and Pink by hiding in a barrel and nearly frightening the life out of them. Tubby, who thinks he can play the trombone, and Flapjack, a typical Irish boy, are well drawn character studies of active adolescence.

Boy Scout songs, drills, stunts and teachings are emphasized throughout the play.

SYNOPSIS FOR THE PROGRAM.

Act I—The supply store at the coal mines. A persecuted Chinaman. Flapjack rescues his father's trousers after a terrible struggle. Ireland vs. China. The upright judge. "The principal reason why so many of our young men go wrong, is because that as boys they were neglected at the most critical time in their lives." The judge decides to give Huck a chance. Hungry Pinky. "I'se so hungry dat my stomach done thinks dat my throat's been cut." A rough-house baseball game in the grocery store. Laying for the Chinaman. Moe Skinsky, the Hebrew loan shark, gets a bath in a tub of vinegar. The Judge and Huck. "I'm going to be your friend, I'm going to make a Boy Scout of you, an honor to your town, to your country and to your God."

Act II—Same scene. Boy Scouts in the making. The Scout laws. Pink and Huck are afraid of the ghost in the cellar. Wun Lung Loo hides in the barrel. "Dat old ghost done come up from the cellar, jumped right through dat barrel and lighted right on top of me." The missing twenty dollars. Huck is suspected of stealing the money. Flapjack disguises as a girl. Norman and the loan shark. Norman confesses to his father. Huck decides to set the skunk trap in the money drawer. In the darkness of the night. "Good-night, Mr. Nigger." Moe decides to rob the money drawer. "Lawsy, lawsy, it's a Jew ghost!" Caught in the trap. "I've got a skunk, that's all, and he's trapped, by jingo!"

Act III—Same scene, several months later. Mr. McCloskey returns on a visit. Norman joins the Boy Scouts. "Some day they'll grow into honest, fearless men, then I'll know my work has not been in vain." Pinky's trouble with his two-hundred-and-fifty-pound wife. "I'se a bachelor now for de rest ob my days." Wun Lung and Pinky renew friendship. "Me velly good Chinaman now." The march of the Boy Scouts of America. Scout song. The mightiest army in the world. Circus drill and stunts. The Judge presents the patrol with an American flag. "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the republic for which it stands;

one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." My country, 'tis of thee! Happy ending.

NOTES FOR THE MANAGER.

This play may be presented in any hall or opera house. Only one scene, the interior of a country general store, is required.

Only three adult characters are introduced in the play, Judge, Skinsky and Mr. McCloskey. Skinsky and McCloskey may be played by the same person. These adult characters may be taken by the larger boys if desired, but it is better to have men play these parts.

In selecting the different boys to impersonate the characters, it is best to have several "reading" rehearsals, at which each boy reads several parts. Sometimes the most retiring boy in the company makes the best mimic and can play the liveliest part. Let your first three or four rehearsals be mere "try-outs" and do not promise anyone a certain part until you are absolutely sure he is the best one for that part.

At the fifth rehearsal every one should be letter perfect in Act I. This play may be successfully presented with about twelve rehearsals. Too many rehearsals make the boys sick of their parts. It is best to hurry the play along and make every one work hard while they are enthusiastic about it. Three weeks is time enough to put on any play.

The tug-of-war scene, the baseball scene, the ghost in the barrel scene and the drills need thorough rehearsing.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

HUCKLEBERRY—Rather slight boy with distinct dramatic ability required for this part. A bright, quick, active boy with a loud speaking voice and plenty of self-confidence. Tattered overalls, one leg torn off at knee. Large old shoes, no socks or stockings. Torn calico shirt. He wears a piece of a straw hat on first entrance. Change to grocer's apron

and cap. Neater costume in Act II. In Act III he wears the regulation suit of a patrol leader of the Boy Scouts.

PINKY—A lazy, no-count negro boy of about nineteen. Blacken face, neck and ears with burnt cork, first drawing a line in black about half an inch all around the mouth. Then moisten cork with water and wash entire face, neck and ears with it. Negro wig may be made by covering skull cap with black excelsior. Large shoes. Red and white striped socks. Trousers much too small for him. He may wear a torn, dilapidated coat originally made for a lady. Small red cap. In Act III, old overcoat or duster, battered hat.

JUDGE—Aged about forty. Gray hair, mustache and short side whiskers, made from crepe hair combed out, shaped to the desired pattern and glued on face with fish glue. A little rouge on cheek bones. Use gray grease paint on eyebrows and draw wrinkles of same on forehead, between eyes, and from nose to corners of mouth. These wrinkles should be very light on a small stage. Neat gray or white suit and hat throughout the play.

MCCLOSKEY—Aged fifty. Tall and thin. Sandy wig and whiskers protruding in front. Spectacles. Sallow make-up. Costume indicates a country store keeper, but without exaggeration. Derby hat.

MOE—Padded very fat. Cut large nose from false face and glue it in position. Large spectacles. Linen duster. Derby hat pulled down over ears. He rubs his hands constantly as if giving them a dry wash. Bright vest. Flashy jewelry. Spats on shoes. Face pale, with straggling whiskers and mustache. Use very thin coating of crepe hair.

NORMAN—Aged sixteen. Neat city clothes. Act III, Scout uniform.

WUN LUNG LOO—Chinese shoes or slippers. White socks. White or blue pajama suit. Paint face yellow with slanting eyebrows of black. Yellow skull cap fitting close all over head. Long black queue of yarn. After cap is in position paint it with yellow grease paint to match the face. Study

the lines as written, word by word, and you will have no trouble with the dialect. Use many gestures and much action, jumping from place to place.

FLAPJACK—Costumes similar to Huckleberry, except when disguised as a girl. Then he wears several underskirts and a calico dress, padded into shape with tissue paper. Striped stockings. Girl's shoes. Girl's wig made of switches and bangs, or simply a large hat with curls sewed in it, or a sunbonnet. Act III: Scout uniform.

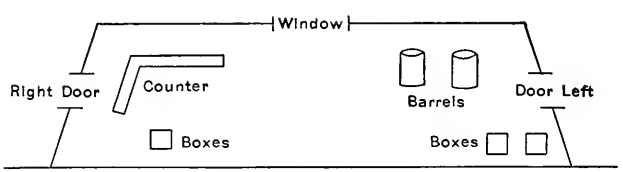
BOYS—Similar to Huck's first suit. Act III: Scout uniforms. Faces dirty in Act I. Very ragged clothes in Act I. Neater suits in Act II.

PROPERTIES.

Trombone or cornet for Tubby.
Ledger on counter for Mr. McCloskey.
Old overalls hidden under the blouse of Wun Lung.
Broom back of counter.
New pair of overalls back of counter.
Satchel for Mr. McCloskey.
Coin for Judge.
Crackers and cheese back of counter.
Signs reading, "Speshul this week—Pee-nut Butter and Hair Oil!" And "Yarn, Apruns, Straight Fronts and Other Goods for Ladies." For Buster.
Tacks and hammer.
Sign: "Sugared Tripe—Fourteen cents a yard." For Tubby.
Sign: "Mixed-up Mincemeat, free from nails and hair." For Micky.
Sign: "Hills Chopped Hay for Breakfast, 15 cts." For Squirmy.
Sign: "Limberger — stronger than Jack Johnson." For Flapjack.
Sign: "Eggs, 10 and 40 a duzzen, according to age." For Freckles.
Sign: "Fresh Country Sassage, with or without." For Lengthy.

Basket back of counter.
Packages (empty) back of counter. Breakfast food, etc.
Large piece of cheese, half wrapped up.
Package of breakfast food, easily broken.
Tub of water.
Boxes and barrels.
Large trick barrel with both ends out.
Candle.
Two large lighted lamps.
Two dark lanterns.
Steel trap.
Money drawer, with sack of money and roll of bills.
Red and white stick candy. Paper bags.
American flag on ropes with pulley.
Staffs for the Boy Scouts.

SCENE PLOT.



NOTE:—If there is no trap door in the stage, cut a hole in the counter and cover it over with paper. Then set the barrel on the counter and Wun can crawl down through the hole and hide under the counter.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *R. D.*, right door; *L. D.*, left door, etc.; 1 *E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R.* 3 *E.*, right entrance upstage, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or scene running across the back of the stage; upstage, away from footlights, down stage, near footlights; 1 *G.*, first groove, etc. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

A COUNTRY BOY SCOUT

Act I.

Scene: *The interior of a general country store. Ordinary interior set used for the scene. Window at rear just high enough for a boy to jump in and out. Entrances R. to rear of store and L. to street. A counter runs from R. corner near audience to up R. and half-way across rear of stage to window. This counter should be far enough from scene to allow boys to pass behind readily. Back of the counter are shelves containing fake packages of breakfast food, tin cans, etc. These articles, with advertising signs, may be borrowed from some large grocery store, who are generally glad to advertise their goods in this way. Boxes and barrels all around stage. Brooms, etc. The entire set must give the audience the idea of a general store in the country. Signs on the walls. Soap boxes at R. and L. for seats.*

If no trap door is used and Wun *descends through the counter, be sure the counter is stout enough to bear his weight and the weight of the trick barrel.*

Lights from front and at R. and L. These lights are to be lowered as indicated in text.

Before the curtain rises the discordant notes from Tubby's *trombone or cornet are heard by the audience. He is trying to play the chorus of "Old Black Joe," or some similar old-time song, but makes many discords and false notes.*

Curtain rises. Mr. McCloskey *is discovered back of counter at R. working on ledger.* Tubby *is seated down L. playing his trombone.* Micky *is outside C. leaning on the open window.*

Tubby (*as he finishes the chorus*). Gee, that was hard

work. But I get it better every time I play it. In two or three months I'll be a reg'lar bandmaster.

MR. M. If you keep that noise up for two or three months, we'll all be dead.

TUBBY. There's just one part I can't get. I dunno what that note is supposed to be. Listen. (*Plays a measure.*)

MICKY. I know what it is.

TUBBY. You do? Well, what is it?

MICKY. It's rotten.

TUBBY. Humph! You're just jealous. You can't appreciate good music. Listen to this. It's called The Angel's Dream. (*Plays discord.*)

MICKY. Angel's Dream? It sounds more like a nightmare.

MR. M. You'd better cut out that noise, Tubby. You're liable to disturb the boss.

TUBBY. Disturb him? Why, I'm serenading him. He's from the city and he can appreciate good music. He ought to give me some money to go to the city and study music. If I had a few lessons, I'd be a regular musical genius.

MICKY. How long's the boss going to be here, McCloskey?

MR. M. Oh, a couple of months. His boy's going to run this store.

MICKY. What are you goin' to do?

MR. M. I've been promoted, I have. I'm going to run the supply store up at Nanticoke.

TUBBY. Gee, I wish somebody would promote me. Here I am a breaker boy in the coal mines, working nights, at five dollars a week, when I orter be in the city studying music. Maybe I'd get in a big brass band and march in parades. I can almost play the chorus of the Star Spangled Banner now. Listen. (*Plays a few bars.*)

MR. M. Cut it out! You're enough to wake the dead.

TUBBY. Nobody appreciates me here. You ain't got no ear fer good music.

MR. M. I ain't never heard no good music.

(*Loud noise and shouting heard outside L.*)

TUBBY (*looks out L. at door*). Gee, there's a scrap! The Chinaman's a running down the street. Look at him go! Look at him go!

MR. M. (*beside him, looking off L.*). And who's that boy chasing him?

TUBBY. It's Flapjack. The chink is coming this way. Here, here! Run in here, chink!

WUN LUNG LOO *rushes in from L. and comes down C.*

WUN LUNG LOO. Save me! Big boy killee poor Chinaman. Save me! (*Falls at feet of* MR. M. *down R.*)

MR. M. What's the matter? What's all the row?

WUN. Him no gotee tickee, no getee washee. No tickee, no washee. (*Crouching at R.*)

Enter FLAPJACK *from L., running in.*

FLAPJACK. Where is he? Where is he? Let me get at him! There he is. (*Starts toward* WUN. TUBBY *pulls him back to L.*)

MR. M. (*at R. C.*). Here, here! What's going on here, anyway?

WUN. Save me. He no gotee tickee and he wantee washee. No tickee, no washee.

FLAP. Give me father's pants, ye villain. (*Starts toward* WUN.)

TUBBY. Sic him, Flapjack! Sic him! Thataboy!

Enter MICKY *from L. He comes down L.*

MR. M. (*protecting* WUN). Here, here! We can't have any fighting today. The Judge is here in the house.

FLAP (*half-crying*). Well, then you make him gimme father's pants. Me father's only got one pair, he has, and he's home in bed waitin' fer me to bring them back from the Chinaman's. Dad'll skin me alive if I don't get 'em. See (*points to* WUN), he's got 'em under his shirt.

WUN. No gotee pants. No gotee pants. Me washee pants, me givee him tickee. He no got tickee, he no get pants. Sabe?

FLAP. You have got the pants, ye lyin', thievin' vaga-

bond. (*Jumps after him.* WUN *runs all around stage, pursued by* FLAP.)

WUN. No gotee pants! No gotee pants! Help! Help!

TUBBY. The pursuit of China by Ireland. Hurroo!

MICKY. Jump on him, Flap. Punch him into sausage meat. (WUN *and* FLAP *fall at C., struggling and rolling over and over.*)

MR. M. (*gets broom and hits* FLAP *with flat end of broom*). Let him alone. Let him alone.

FLAP. I gotta get me father's pants. (*On top of* WUN.)

WUN. No gotee pants. Gotee shirt, gotee socks, but no gotee pants.

FLAP (*drawing pair of overalls from under* WUN'S *blouse*). Ye thievin' heathen, there they are. They're me father's pants.

MR. M. (*pulling* FLAP *to R.*). Ain't you ashamed of yourself? To fight with a poor, innocent Chinese heathen.

FLAP. I'd be more ashamed if me father had to walk around without any pants at all.

TUBBY (*pulls* WUN *over to L.*). Keep still, ye heathen, or I'll put ye in my trombone and play Chinese music for a month.

WUN. No gotee tickee. No tickee, no washee.

MR. M. Now, what's all this disturbance about?

WUN. I washee pants. I givee tickee. All this was day beflore yes'day. Today he no got tickee. I say, no got tickee, no get washee.

FLAP. I lost the ticket, so I did. I lost it in swimming.

MR. M. (*to* WUN). Do these overalls belong to this boy?

WUN. Maybe. I dunno. He no got tickee.

FLAP. Sure, they belong to me father. And they're the only ones he's got at all, at all.

MR. M. Have you paid him for washing them?

FLAP. I have not. Here's yer dime, Ching Ching Choo.

WUN. Me no Ching Ching Choo. Me Wun Lung Loo.

MR. M. Wun, take the money. (*He does so.*) That's right. Now, Flapjack, the overalls belong to you.

FLAP. Indade they do not, sor; they belong to me father. Sure it's the only pair he's got to his back.

MR. M. Well, hurry up and take them to him. Maybe he's needing them. But before you go, I want you to shake hands with Wun Lung and be friends.

FLAP. I'll shake hands with no heathen rat-eater, I won't.

MR. M. Very well, then, you can't have the overalls.

FLAP. And what'll me father do then?

MR. M. He'll have to do without, unless you shake hands with Wun Lung.

FLAP. Well, I don't want to do it, but I will sooner than have me father without any pants at all, at all. (*Offers hand to* WUN.)

WUN (*shakes hand*). All light.

(*As* WUN *stands facing* FLAP, MICKY *kneels behind* WUN *and* FLAP *pushes* WUN *over* MICKY. WUN *falls to L., but as he falls he grabs the overalls from* FLAP'S *arms.*)

FLAP (*trying to pull the overalls from* WUN). Gimme me father's pants.

WUN. No getee pants, no getee pants. (*Rises, but still holds one leg of the overalls.*)

FLAP (*holding the other leg*). Gimme a hand here, boys. (MICKY *puts his arms around* FLAP'S *waist,* TUBBY *then puts his arms around* MICKY'S *waist. They pull, dragging* WUN *around the stage. Finally* MR. M. *puts his arms around* WUN'S *waist, thus forming a tug of war. At a given signal the overalls tear in two and all fall to the floor.*)

FLAP. Now look at me father's pants. (*Waves one leg.*)

WUN. Old man makee you sick. He lick the lining out of you.

FLAP (*jumps on* WUN *and throws him down*). Gimme that other leg. (*They roll over and over.*)

Enter JUDGE TOLLIVER *from R.*

JUDGE. Hello, what's going on in here? A relay race or a wrestling match?

ALL. The boss! (*All rise.*)

JUDGE. What was the trouble, boys?

WUN. He no gotee tickee and wantee washee. He pull me, he kick me, he make me tear pants, he makee much trouble for poor Chinee.

FLAP. Aw, Judge, it ain't so. Me father only had one pair of pants, so he did—and now look what's left of 'em. Now, begorry, he's only got half a pair.

JUDGE. Well, well, we can't have your father going around town in half a pair of pants. Mr. McCloskey, give this young man a new pair of overalls for his father.

FLAP (*astonished*). A new pair? Do you mean it, boss?

JUDGE. Certainly.

FLAP. And you're goin' to give 'em to me?

JUDGE. That's what I intended to do, but of course, if you'd rather pay for them—

FLAP. No, thanks; I'd rather have you give 'em to me. And I'm much obliged, your honor, and sure it's a fine gintleman you are. (*Takes new pair of overalls from* MR. M.) And as fer you, Ching Ching Choo (*stands behind* WUN), here's a present wid me compliments. (*Throws old torn overalls around* WUN'S *neck, nearly strangling him.*)

MICKY. Come on, Flapjack. (*Runs out L.*)

FLAP. In a minute. Good-bye, Judge, and I'm much obliged. (*Exits L.*)

TUBBY (*goes to* JUDGE *and shakes hands with him*). Judge, you're a gentleman, so you are. I'll come back pretty soon and give you a serenade on my trombone, and I won't charge you a cent. (*Exit L., playing a few bars on the trombone.*)

JUDGE (*coming to* WUN *and helping him arrange the torn overalls*). And now, my lad, they treated you pretty badly, didn't they?

WUN. Everybody treatee poor Chinee badly. No gotee father, no gotee mother, no gotee brother, no gotee friend, no gotee nothing.

JUDGE (*shaking hands with him*). Don't say that, my boy. I'll be your friend.

WUN. You be friend to poor Wun Lung Loo? You velly good man, velly, velly good man.

JUDGE. Here's a little present for you, Wun Lung Loo. (*Offers half dollar.*)

WUN. Judgee give me half dollar? No! Wun Lung Loo no takee money from his friend. All light, Judge, me no takee money, but maybe some day I show you that Wun Lung Loo can be good friend, too. Sabe? You velly good friend; some day Wun Lung Loo he be velly good friend, too. (*Exit L.*)

JUDGE. There, I've done a good stroke of work this morning.

MR. M. (*behind counter at R.*). You have? What did you do? Make three or four thousand dollars?

JUDGE. No, I made a friend, and a good friend is worth all the money in the world.

MR. M. But he's only a Chinaman.

JUDGE. That makes no difference; he's a man, and I believe he was grateful for what I did for him.

MR. M. Them boys just about pester the life out of him. We've got a tough set of boys here at the coal mines.

JUDGE. Those three that were in here didn't look tough. They only looked like good, healthy, red-blooded boys.

MR. M. They're just about the worst in the lot. They and their leader.

JUDGE. Who is their leader?

MR. M. A little runt called Huckleberry. Nobody knows what his other name is. He used to be in the county poor house. He's little, all right, but tough! (*Whistles.*) He's the worst kid in the county, and I reckon you ain't got many up in the city as bad as he is.

JUDGE. What does he do?

MR. M. Oh, he does everything he hadn't ought to. Robs chicken roosts, goes fishin' on Sunday, gets the breaker boys to run away from the mines, steals apples from the farmers, and once he like to set the meeting-house at Ridge-

ville on fire. He's been in the poor house and the county farm and twice in the county jail, and he ain't no bigger than that. (*Motions* HUCK'S *height.*)

JUDGE. Maybe he isn't a bad boy at all, maybe he's just got a wrong start. That's the thing that makes bad men, McCloskey, getting a wrong start. We ought to start a Boy Scout patrol here at the mines.

MR. M. That would be all right for city boys, but you don't realize what a bunch of rowdies we have to put up with down here.

JUDGE. I think I'll see if I can't form some sort of a scout organization. The principal reason why so many of our men, especially our young men, go wrong, is because that as boys they were neglected at the most critical time in their lives, the period from thirteen to twenty years of age. The boy at that age must have physical exercise, something to curb his energies. He can be saved by giving him plenty to do of the things he likes to do, athletics, carpentry, outdoor sports and games, camping and nature study.

MR. M. If you're going to try anything like that with the boys here at the coal mines, you're going to have your hands full.

JUDGE. Maybe I owe it to them. They work in my mines. I have made most of my money from their work and their fathers' work. It is my duty to do something for them if I can.

MR. M. Well, look out that they don't burn the house over your head.

JUDGE. I expect to be down here for three or four months, while you are transferred to the supply department at Nanticoke. The real reason for this is that I want my boy Norman to run the supply store here. City life offers too many temptations to a boy like Norman, so I've decided to see what he can do here as storekeeper.

MR. M. Well, it's a promotion fer me, so I ain't kicking none; but you and your boy certainly are going to have your hands full. I've got everything all ready, Judge, and

I can get away on the evening train. It leaves in about twenty minutes.

JUDGE. I'm sure you'll like it up in Nanticoke. My boy Norman ought to be in on that train.

MR. M. I ain't seen him since he was a little baby. He was born here at the mines, wasn't he?

JUDGE. Yes, Norman was born here.

MR. M. How do you reckon he'll like it here. Keeping this supply store ain't no cinch.

JUDGE. He's got to like it. I'm afraid I've been too indulgent with Norman since his mother died. He's sown quite a crop of wild oats in the city, so I thought I'd see what I could do with him down here.

MR. M. We don't have much trouble. Once in a while the miners get into a scrape, and the kids are awful tough, but we don't have much real trouble. There's only one real bad man in town, Gypsy Jake. Maybe you remember him.

JUDGE. Yes, I remember him. His wife was Martha Enlow, wasn't she?

MR. M. Yes, that's right. He broke her heart when he was sent to the penitentiary fifteen years ago. She lived only a short time after he was sent up.

JUDGE. She used to work for my wife. She was Norman's nurse. So, Gypsy Jake is out of prison?

MR. M. Yes, he's been hanging around here for about two months. He's the most troublesome man in town. A natural born loafer and crook. The kid Huckleberry stays with him. Birds of a feather, you know.

JUDGE. That's bad. He's evidently not content with ruining his own life, but now he's trying to ruin a young boy. Has he any legal claim on the boy?

MR. M. Yes, he's his boy, I reckon; like father, like son.

JUDGE. And he's the bad boy you spoke about as the leader of the gang here at the mines?

MR. M. He's the one—the worst kid in the county.

JUDGE. I'd like to see him—I'd like to give him a chance. His mother, Martha Enlow, was a good woman and my

wife's trusted servant. For her sake I think I'll give her boy a chance. What is his name?

MR. M. He ain't ever had any name but Huckleberry. His mother died when he was a baby, and his father was in prison. He was brought up at the poor house.

JUDGE. Poor little kid—no wonder you call him the worst boy in the county. It's environment, McCloskey. Environment either makes or breaks a boy.

(*"Hurry" music, eight bars. Great noise and racket heard off L. Shouts, etc.*)

JUDGE. What on earth is that?

MR. M. Bet five cents it's Huckleberry. He's always up to something. That boy is at the bottom of everything bad that happens in this town. (*Looks out of window.*) Right now he appears to be at the bottom of the well.

JUDGE. Has he fallen in the well? (*Looks out of the window.*)

MR. M. No such luck. He's around at the door.

Enter HUCKLEBERRY *from L. and sees* MR. M., *who is standing down C.*

HUCKLEBERRY (*pulls* MR. M.'s *whiskers*). Hello, Rube, how's crops? (*Sees* JUDGE, *who is down right,* HUCK *wilts and makes funny exit at L.*) Good night!

HUCK. *knocks on door at L.*

MR. M. Crazy as a bat. Come in, come in, you triflin' critter.

Enter HUCK. *from L.*

MR. M. Come here. (HUCK *takes one slide toward him.*) Come here. (HUCK *takes another slide.*) Here! (HUCK *slides to him.*) Now what was you a-doin' out there?

HUCK (*whispers to him*). Drinkin'.

MR. M. What?

HUCK (*whispers*). Drinkin'.

MR. M. Louder.

HUCK (*yells*). Drinkin'!

MR. M. You must be a hard drinker. Did you swaller the well bucket?

HUCK. Nope, I went to drink out'n the well bucket, and the rope flew off and the handle flew round, and the bucket flew down, down, clean down to the bottom ker-chug.

MR. M. Well, what do you want here?

HUCK. Kinder thought I might swipe a piece of pie. You ain't got none to give away today, have you? I'd also like a glass of milk. I'm too bashful to ask fer water.

MR. M. You get out. We ain't giving away the company's supplies today. When we start that, I'll let you know. Now, clear out.

HUCK. Please, boss, I'm hungry. I'm so hungry I could eat a bakery, oven and all.

MR. M. Clear out. We're busy.

JUDGE (*coming to R. C.*). Just a minute, Mr. McCloskey. You have the train to catch in a few minutes. You go and get ready while I talk to this lad.

MR. M. Well, don't forget what I told you about him. He's a bad egg. (*Exits R.*)

JUDGE. Mr. McCloskey tells me you're from the poor house.

HUCK. Dat's right, boss. I lived in parlor B on de ground floor.

JUDGE. Why didn't they find you a good position with some respectable farmer?

HUCK. They did. When I left the poor house I thought I was straight on the road to glory, but when I got onto me job I found I'd got mixed up in the roads, for instead of going to glory I was headed straight to—(*points down*).

JUDGE (*quickly interrupts*). Never mind. Didn't the farmer treat you well?

HUCK. Made me work twelve hours a day, made me sleep in the barn with the mules, made me work harder'n any man on the place. Made me get up at four o'clock in the morning and split wood. Made me eat poor house soup. You know what poor house soup is, mister? Quart of warm water an' a piece of potato. Now I'm livin' with me dad.

JUDGE. With Gypsy Jake, eh?

HUCK. Yep. It ain't no palace, mister, and Gypsy Jake ain't no guardeen angel; but it's home. Jake's been out of jail over two months now.

JUDGE. How would you like to go to work?

HUCK. Jake says it ain't respectable to work. What's the use of work when you can make a good livin' without it?

JUDGE. But you want to save up for a rainy day, don't you?

HUCK. Naw, I got an umbrella, I have.

JUDGE. Now, my lad, I've taken quite a fancy to you.

HUCK. You have? What for?

JUDGE. I've decided to see if I can make a good, honest man of you.

HUCK. I'll have to grow seven or eight years yet.

JUDGE. How would you like to work here in the supply store?

HUCK. Me? Work here? Say, boss, you're kidding me, ain't you?

JUDGE. No. I'm willing to start you in at five dollars a week.

HUCK. Five dollars a week. Gee, in a month I'll be a reg'lar millionaire.

JUDGE. Do you think you'd like the job?

HUCK. I'd like any job on earth for five dollars a week. I'm goin' to buy me a Ford automobile and a couple of diamond rings.

JUDGE. Your work will be easy. My son Norman is going to manage the store. He's just about your age and I think you two will get along all right together.

HUCK. I'll bet a nickel I can lick him.

JUDGE. I hardly think that will be necessary. Remember, he is to be your boss.

HUCK. Are you really going to give me a chance? Nobody never gave me no chance before.

JUDGE. Certainly, Huck, I'll give you a chance. I used to know your mother. For her sake, I'll give you a chance.

HUCK (*shakes hands with him*). Thank ye, boss; thank ye.

JUDGE. Now go in there and put on a grocery apron and get to work. You're the assistant manager of the supply store now.

HUCK. Say, boss, when you going to give me the five dollars?

JUDGE. One week from tonight.

HUCK. Gee, I gotta go and tell the gang. They'll think I'm a reg'lar millionaire with five whole dollars every week.

JUDGE. How many are in your gang, Huck?

HUCK. Oh, seven or eight kids. We jest kind o' run together.

JUDGE. I wonder how you and your gang would like to become Boy Scouts?

HUCK. We'd rather be pirates, or hold-up men. Flapjack says he'd like to rob a bank, but that's awful dangerous. His dad never was sent to the penitentiary like mine was, so he don't know what he's talking about. It ain't no cinch to get sent up for three or four years.

JUDGE. I'd like to meet your gang.

HUCK. Oh, you'll meet 'em all right. We've got a swell gang, we have. There's Flapjack, whose dad works in the mines, and Tubby Timmons, who can play on a trombone jest as natural as life, and Squirmy Bean, who can swim with six different strokes, and Micky Malone, who's the best boy hunter in this neck of the woods—he kin shoot anything, and old Buster Brown, who's got an eddication. Buster can read books, and not only books and printed writin', but letters and all kinds of written writin'. And then there's Pinky—he's a coon, Pinky is, but he's all right, even if his skin is black. We got a swell gang.

Enter MR. M. *from R. with satchel.*

MR. M. I'm all ready. The train is due here in about five minutes.

JUDGE. I'll walk over to the station with you.

MR. M. Who's going to watch the store?

JUDGE. I've just hired a boy. Huck is to be the new clerk.

MR. M. Huck?

JUDGE. Yes, sir.

HUCK. Yep. I'm the guy. Goin' to git five dollars a week.

MR. M. Well, look out that he don't set the house afire.

JUDGE. Huck, I'm going to walk over to the station with Mr. McCloskey. You can open that barrel while I'm gone. (*Points to barrel.*) And if anyone wants anything tell them to come in this afternoon. I can trust you, can't I? (*Offers his hand.*)

HUCK (*shakes hands with him*). Bet your life..

JUDGE. Then come along, Mr. McCloskey, we've just got time to catch the train. (*They go out at L.*)

HUCK (*sings and dances around the stage*). Five dollars a week and me the boss of the supply store. What'll the gang say? Five dollars a week. Hurray, hurray! (*Suddenly serious.*) What'll the old man say? I'll bet a nickel he'll steal my five dollars. No, he won't! I'm going to bury it in the ground down by the spring, and save up enough to git me a Ford automobile. Five dollars a week! Hurray, hurray!

PINKY *looks in at the window.*

PINKY. Hello, Huck.

HUCK. Hello, Pink. Come on in.

Enter PINKY *and* BUSTER *from L.*

BUSTER (*down L.*). Come on, Huck, let's go a-fishin'.

HUCK (*down R.*). I can't do it, son; this is my busy day. I'm a man of business now.

PINKY (*down C.*). Better had come, Huck. De bullheads is bitin' mighty splendiferous, dey sure am.

HUCK. I'd like to go, but who'd take care of my store?

BUSTER. Your store? Where's your store?

HUCK. This is my store. I'm the boss here.

PINKY. Go 'long, boy, you're sick with de heat.

HUCK. I ain't neither. It's the truth. The boss hired me this morning, and I'm going to get five dollars a week.

BUSTER (*astonished*). Five dollars a week?

PINKY (*very much astonished*). Well, shoot me down dead with a bowie knife. Is you, sure enough?

HUCK. Sure enough. Five big round dollars every week.

PINKY. Lawd sakes! I didn't know dere was dat much money in de world.

HUCK. Mr. McCloskey has been moved up to Nanticoke and the boss's son is going to run the store, and I'm to be his chief cook and bottle washer, and I get five dollars a week.

PINKY. Say, Huck, can't you gimme a job here. I can clean de windows, and scrub de floors. I'm a good boy for work, I am.

HUCK. You'll have to see the boss. Say, wait till I go and get my grocery apron on, and I'll show you what a real, live grocery boy looks like. (*Exits R.*)

PINKY. Well, you kin shoot me down dead with a bowie knife. I'd never a thunk it; never.

BUSTER. Say, Pink, I'm going to paint some signs for the grocery store. Of course we want to help Huck make a lot of money, don't we?

PINKY. Sure, we does.

BUSTER. Then I'll paint him some dandy signs that he can hang up here in the store. I'll be back pretty soon. (*Exit L.*)

PINKY. Old Huckleberry gwine to get five dollars a week. Well, you kin shoot me down dead with a bowie knife, you sure kin.

Enter HUCK, *wearing an apron and cap. He stands back of counter at R.*

HUCK. Well, Mr. Pinky Pinfeathers, what can I serve you today?

PINKY. You kin serve me to anything dat you is giving away, free for nothing, with no cost. Dat's what you kin serve me.

HUCK. How'd you like some crackers and cheese?

PINKY. Boy, boy, I'd ruther hab some good old crackers and cheese dan I would a golden harp and a pair ob angel wings. You jest naturally reads my thoughts.

HUCK. Hungry, are you?

PINKY. Huck, I'se so hungry dat my stomach done thinks my throat has been cut. I ain't had nuthin' to eat since—(*pause*) since de last time.

HUCK (*gives him some crackers and cheese*). Have a little treat on the new clerk.

PINKY (*eating*). Much obliged, boss. (*Trying to talk with his mouth very full.*) I'll do the same thing for you some day.

HUCK. There's only one thing I've got against this job, Pinky.

PINKY. What's dat?

HUCK (*comes to him, takes him by arm and leads him with long steps down to L., looks all around mysteriously, puts finger on lips and says*) Sh!

PINKY (*frightened*). What's a matter? What are you shissing for?

HUCK (*leads* PINKY *with long steps to R., looks around mysteriously, places finger on lips*). Sh!

PINKY (*nervously*). Dat makes two shisses.

HUCK. I believe this place is haunted, Pinky.

PINKY (*with his knees trembling*). Haunted? Go way, Huck; dere ain't no hants 'round yere.

HUCK. I went down cellar to get this apron and away over in one corner of the cellar is a big black hole. Great, big, deep, black hole!

PINKY (*trembling*). Oh, lawsy, lawsy!

HUCK. I didn't have no light, and just as I was coming up the stairs I looked over toward that big, black hole and I heard something go Ooo! (*Faint groan.*) Just that way.

PINKY. Dat's de way dey does. Dat's de way dey allers does. And nen did it go "Woof, woof!" jes' datway?

HUCK. I never waited to hear no Woof, woof! When

I heard the Ooo, I jumped up seven steps at a time. Do they have hants down in cellars, Pinky?

PINKY. Do dey? *Do dey?* De cellar is de mostest promiscous place dat a ghost *kin* be. Did you see him, Huck?

HUCK. I don't know. I saw something kind o' wiggle.

PINK (*excitedly*). Dat's it, dat's it, de worstest kind ob a ghost always wiggles. Boy, I'm gwine home while de goin' is good.

HUCK. Oh, he can't come up here. See, the trap is closed. (*Points to trap.*)

PINKY. Is it closed tight?

HUCK. I'll put this barrel on top of it. A ghost couldn't get up through the barrel, could it?

PINKY (*dubiously*). I dunno. Dey ain't no tellin' what a ghost *kin* do when he makes up his mind.

Enter BUSTER *from L. carrying two signs reading "Speshul this Week—Pee-nut Butter and Hair Oil!" And "Yarn, Apruns, Straight Fronts and Other Goods for Ladies." The audience must not see these signs until they are tacked in place.*

HUCK. What you got, Buster?

BUSTER. Couple of signs to help advertise your business. The gang is making some more. We're going to boost the supply store and help you sell everything in stock. (*Tacks up the signs, assisted by* PINKY.)

HUCK. That's right. When a feller gets five dollars a week, he ought to earn it.

Enter TUBBY *and* MICKY *from L.*

TUBBY (*takes up a sign at rear reading, "Sugared Tripe —fourteen cents a yard"*). I guess I've got the best sign of all. Huck, you're going to be swamped with customers.

MICKY (*tacks up sign reading, "Mixed-up Mincemeat, free from nails and hair"*). Business is going to boom, Huck. The gang is all going to stand right by you.

Enter SQUIRMY *and* FLAPJACK *from L. with signs.*

SQUIRMY. Where do you want me to hang this? (*Shows sign, "Hill's Chopped Hay for Breakfast, 15 cts."*)

HUCK. Put it down here. (*Indicates a counter facing audience.*)

FLAP. I got a good one. (*Shows sign reading, "Limberger—stronger than Jack Johnson."*) I'll put it here. (*Tacks it up.*)

Two other boys with signs, "Eggs 10 *and* 40 *a duzzen, accordin' to age"—and "Fresh Country Sassage, With or without!" They are greeted by* HUCK *and their signs displayed.*

PINKY (*after all signs are in place*). Dat's fine. Now this looks something like a first-class supply store. (*All loaf around stage.*)

SQUIRMY (*lying on floor with legs upright against counter*). All we got to get now is some customers.

FLAP (*sitting cross-legged on the counter*). I'll swipe a dinner bell and me father's red flannel undershirt and stand out in front and holler auction. That's the way they do in the city.

PINKY (*seated on box down L.*). Yes, and den hab de boss come in and fire us all. And besides (*lowers voice mysteriously*), ghostesses don't hanker after no dinner bells in de daytime!

ALL (*frightened*). Ghostesses?

PINKY. Yas, sah; yas, indeedy. We's got a ghost, we has. Great big one 'bout leven million miles high, wif a long tail, and fire comes a snortin' out'n its nose. It libs down cellar. Huck done seen it.

ALL. Did you sure-enough, Huck?

HUCK. Sure, I did. And it had great big yellow wings and it groaned all the time.

FLAP. How could a ghost leven million miles high be down in your little old cellar?

PINKY (*imitates*). It jes' scrooges down and scrooges down, till dey ain't nuffin left ob it 'cept de smell.

TUBBY. What does a ghost smell like, Pink?

PINKY. Sorter peculiar. Sometimes like brimstone and sometimes like sulphur, but mos' generally like blood.

HUCK. But he can't get up here. We got that barrel settin' on the trap.

SQUIRMY. I believe you're full of beans. I'll bet there ain't no such thing as a ghost.

PINKY (*apprehensively*). Talk low, boy, talk low. Ghostesses has got sensible feelings jest de same as people, and if you gets one mad at you, *good night!*

MICKY (*at window*). Here comes a man down the street. Maybe it's a customer.

HUCK (*runs behind counter*). I'm all ready for him. Don't crowd around fellers. Jest act natural-like and easy.

MICKY (*looking out of window*). No, he went on by.

HUCK. Tubby, take your horn out in front and give 'em a selection. That had ought to draw customers.

TUBBY. All right. I'll play "Nearer, my God to Thee." That's the only selection that I know clear through. (*Exits L.*)

SQUIRMY. Say, the day-shift kids has challenged us to a baseball game on the Fourth of July.

PINKY. De day-shift kids? What do dem little Lizzie boys know about baseball?

MICKY. Oh, we won't do a thing to the day-shift kids. I'm goin' to pitch.

HUCK. Nothin' doin'. You pitched last time—and see what they done to us. I'm goin' to pitch meself.

FLAP. Sure, I'm goin' to pitch. When I throws me spit ball, there ain't no one can stop it. You orter see me pitch when I used to live in the city. (TUBBY *starts to play on trombone outside.*)

HUCK. That's right, Tubby. Give it to 'em strong. (*At window.*)

PINKY. Dat boy sure enough has got a musical disposition. He can make more noise dan any musical man I eber met.

TUBBY (*sticks his head in at window*). Here comes a customer. Get ready.

HUCK (*hurries behind counter*). Tell him to come right in.

TUBBY. Go right in. You won't? Then I'll push you in.

Enter TUBBY *from L., dragging in* WUN LUNG LOO.

WUN (*goes to window*). All light. Me pay you next

FLAP (*pulls him down to counter*). Begorry, you'll come in whether you wantee or not.

WUN. No wantee come. You all velly bad boys.

BUSTER (*pulling* WUN *to his sign*). See here, Chink. (*Points to sign.*) Speshul this week peanut butter and hair oil. That's just what you want to buy.

WUN (*trying to pull away*). No wantee buy peanut butter. No eatee peanut butter—no drinkee hair oil.

BUSTER. Then look at this one. Yarns, aprons, straight fronts and other goods for ladies.

WUN. No wantee no straight front. No gotee no lady.

MICKY (*grabs him and drags him to other side of stage*). The first thing you want is a basket. Huck, give him a basket.

WUN (*protesting*). No wantee basket.

MICKY (*hangs basket on his arm*). There you are. A fine market basket, just the right size for a Chinaman. Now you want some Mixed-up Mincemeat free from nails and hairs. Huck, gimme about three packages of that mincemeat. (*Throws it in* WUN'S *basket.*)

SQUIRMY (*grabs* WUN *and pulls him to other side*). Look at this. Some nice fresh breakfast food. Hill's Chopped Hay for Breakfast, fifteen cents. Gimme about two packages, Huck. There you are, Wun Lung Loo. That'll make you fat and greasy.

FLAP (*grabbing* WUN). Sure and yez also want some nice strong limburger cheese. All our Chinese customers buy limburger cheese. About twenty cents worth, Huck.

WUN (*taking limburger, turns head away from it, holds nose*). Say, this cheese is no good; this cheese heap much sick.

FLAP. Sick? Begorry, that cheese is dead.

SQUIRMY (*puts packages in* WUN'S *basket*). And here's some eggs and some fresh country sassage.

BUSTER. And here's a couple of bottles of peanut butter.

(WUN *is now very agreeable and runs about to each, smiling and holding his basket for contributions.*)

WUN. Me likee potatoes. Heap muchee potatoes.

HUCK (*puts potatoes in basket*). There you are, Wun. The bill is five dollars.

WUN (*pauses at C.*). Five dollars? (*All watch him breathlessly.*)

HUCK. And forty-eight cents.

WUN (*goes to window*). All light. Me pay you next Christmas. (*Jumps through window and runs out.*)

HUCK. Well, what do you know about that? (*All run to window.*)

FLAP. Tubby is chasing him down the street. He'll bring him back and make him pay. (*All resume former attitudes.*)

HUCK. He was goin' to pay anyhow. He was just trying to be cute.

PINKY. Say, we orter go out and practice for dat baseball game dis afternoon.

FLAP. Let's go over to Johnson's lot.

HUCK. I can't go. I've got to stay here at the store. And besides it's getting dark.

FLAP. Aw, lock up the old store.

HUCK. Nothing doing. I've got to earn that five dollars a week.

MICKY. I think I orter be the pitcher.

FLAP. Micky, you know you can't throw spit balls like me. (*Takes package of breakfast food.*) I just double up me fist, like that (*imitates*), and off she goes like that! (*Throws package across stage.*)

HUCK. Huh! I can do as good as that. (*Doubles up like a baseball pitcher, swings arm around head, then throws package across stage.*)

MICKY. Now watch me. (*He doubles up, etc., and throws package to L., hitting* TUBBY, *who is entering L.*)

Enter TUBBY.

TUBBY (*falling*). Help! Murder! What's the matter?

MICKY. I was just throwing me famous pitch; that's all.

HUCK. Where's the Chinaman?

TUBBY. The Chinaman?

HUCK. Yes. Weren't you chasing him down the street?

TUBBY. Yes; but he got away. But he yelled out that he was coming back after dark.

ALL. Coming back after dark?

SQUIRMY. What for?

TUBBY. I dunno. Maybe he wants to complain to the boss.

FLAP. Maybe he wants to rob the store.

HUCK. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll hide around here and give him a hot time in the old town tonight. There's a big tub full of vinegar there in that room. (*Points to R.*) Let's get it out, and when the Chinaman comes, we'll pickle him in vinegar.

MICKY. Won't it hurt him?

FLAP. What's the difference. He'll be a Chinese cucumber.

MICKY. But won't it hurt the vinegar?

HUCK. Hurt it? No; it'll just give it a little Chinese flavoring; that's all. Tubby, you go down there and stand by the street corner, and when the Chinaman passes you, blow on your trombone. We'll do the rest. Won't we, fellers.

ALL (*grasping each other's hands, forming a ring and capering around, singing*:)

Oh, we won't do a thing to Wun Lung,
We won't do a thing to Wun Lung,
We won't do a thing to Wun Lung—
We'll throw him in the tub.

HUCK. Hurry up, Tubby, and don't forget to blow on the trombone when you see him coming.

TUBBY. All right. I'll make yer hear me all right. (*Exits L.*)

PINKY. Now about dis yer baseball; if I'se gwine to be captain, I hereby and hereon appoints Mr. Flapjack O'Shaugnessy as de pitcher, and Mr. Micky Malone as de

catcher. Here, take your places here. I'll be de yumpire. Buster Brown at bat. (*They form for a game of baseball.*)

FLAP. Where's me ball?

HUCK (*tosses him three packages of breakfast food*). Here's yer ball.

MICKY. Let's have a reg'lar game. Get on the bases, fellers.

BUSTER. Where's my bat?

HUCK (*tosses him a broom*). Here's your bat. (*Lively music.*)

FLAP. All ready. (*Throws box with much exertion.* BUSTER *strikes but misses it.*)

PINKY. Stri-i-ike one!

(FLAP *throws a second box.* BUSTER *hits it with a broom, breaking it and spilling breakfast food. Note: This box must be arranged to be easily broken. All boys fall at C., scrambling for the breakfast food.*)

PINKY. Play ball, play ball. What you all think this is? A free lunch? (*They resume former positions.* BUSTER *makes a strike. The boys on the bases run around. Much noise and confusion.* PINKY *grabs the box and starts to eat. All scramble for the breakfast food, rolling all around the floor. The counter and shelves are knocked over in the excitement. This business should be fast and furious, interspersed with yells, etc. Finally* TUBBY *is heard blowing on trombone out L. All get up and listen. Music ends.*)

HUCK. It's the Chinaman, fellers. Come on and get the tub. (PINKY, FLAP *and* SQUIRMY *go out R. and come in bearing large tub full of water.*)

BUSTER. Sh! Sh! Don't make a noise. He'll think we've all gone home.

HUCK. I'll turn down the light. (*He does so.*)

PINKY. Say, dat there Chinaman will think dat de world's done come to an end at last.

HUCK. Sh! Don't make any noise. If he thinks we are here, he won't come in.

BUSTER. Let's put the tub here in front of the door, then he'll fall in it.

FLAP. But he won't fall hard enough. Pinky, you and me's goin' to throw him in. I owe him one anyhow fer tearin' me father's pants.

SQUIRMY (*peeking out of window*). Somebody's coming up the road.

HUCK. All ready, fellers. Lay low and don't breathe.

Low, "sneaky" music. The boys line up on either side of the L. entrance. The stage is nearly dark. MOE SKINSKY *fumbles at door L., finally opens it and peers in. He sees no one and enters L. He comes down C.*

FLAP (*loudly*). Hurray! Grab him, boys! (*They grab him.*)

PINKY. Mistah Chinaman, your time has come.

FLAP (*in a sing song tone*):

Up she goes,
Back she goes,
Out she goes,
And in she goes.

(FLAP *and* PINK *balance* MOE *back and forth until the words "in she goes," when they seat him in the tub of water.*)

MOE SKINSKY. Help! Murder! Thieves! I'm robbed. I'm a dead man. (*As they throw him in tub.*) Suffering catfish, I'm a drowned man, cause I can't svim a stroke, so help me Isaac. Help! Help! (*End music.*)

Enter JUDGE *and* NORMAN *from L.*

NORMAN. What's going on in here, anyhow?

MOE. Help! Help! I'm a dead man. And I can't svim a stroke, so help me Isaac.

NORMAN. Where's the light, father?

JUDGE. Here it is. (*Lights up.*)

NORMAN (*pulls* MOE *out of tub*). Who did this? What is it? A gang of robbers? (*The frightened boys all cluster at L.*)

JUDGE (*down R.*). Huck, what does this mean?

HUCK. We thought it was the Chinaman.

MOE. They all jumped on me und nearly drowned the life out of me. Call the police. I've been assaulted and battered. I've been robbed.

JUDGE. I think not, Mr. Skinsky. It was only a little lark.

MOE. A lark? A lark? If dot was a lark, so help me Isaac, I never vant to see another von.

JUDGE (*at R.*). Huck, I want to have a talk with you. You'd better tell your friends to go.

FLAP. Sure, boss, it was all my fault. Don't be too hard on Huck.

PINKY. No, sah, boss; it was all my fault. I ain't nuthin' but a nigger, no how. If you's gwine to fire anybody, fire me.

JUDGE. That will do, boys. Good night. (*Exit* SQUIRMY *at L., followed by all the boys except* HUCK.)

NORMAN. I think this one was the ring leader, father.

MOE. Dot's vot he was, so help me Isaac. He is a murderer und a robber und a 'salt und batterer.

HUCK (*comes to* JUDGE *at C., pauses, looks at him sadly*). Well, it was all my fault. I orter had better sense. The first time in me life I ever had a job and now I've spilled the beans. I don't want no pay. I'll get me hat and go back home.

JUDGE. Wait a minute. Are you sorry for what you have done, Huck?

HUCK. Sorry? Gosh! I'm so sorry I could chew a brick.

MOE. Und look at me. Maybe you dink dot I ain't sorry. He like to killed me, Judge. He jumped on me and threw me in a tub, und look at me now. I ain't a healthy man, nohow.

NORMAN. Father, you ought to make an example of him. You ought to put a stop to this backwoods roughhouse here at your mines. This boy ought to be put in jail.

HUCK (*crying*). Oh, no, boss; please don't put me in jail. Gimme another chance, boss. I ain't never had no chance before. I ain't never had a job ner a home ner

nothin', not even a dog. Please, Judge, gimme another chance.

JUDGE. I have made up my mind. As my son says, I ought to make an example of you and put a stop to the lawlessness here at the mines. And I am going to make an example of you. I'm going to let you keep your job, I'm going to give you six dollars a week, and I'm going to trust you as I would my own son. (*Shakes hands with him.*) If I turn you adrift now without a home, without a friend, you'd probably turn out bad; but I'm going to help you, boy, I'm going to be your friend. I'm going to make a Boy Scout of you, an honor to your town, to your country, and to your God!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: *The same as Act I. Stage is neatly arranged as the interior of a general store.* HUCK *stands behind counter, wearing a grocer's apron.* PINKY *stands at rear in front of window.* FLAPJACK, TUBBY, SQUIRMY, MICKY, BUSTER, FRECKLES *and* LENGTHY *are seated around the stage.*

Before the curtain rises the boys are heard singing:

SCOUT SONG.

(*To the tune of "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."*)

Oh, the Boy Scouts have captured the country,
From the Gulf to the Lakes everywhere,
From the east to the west they are loyal,
Ever ready to do and to dare.
And wherever our flag proudly flutters
'Neath the folds of the red, white and blue,
You'll find there a band of brave fellows,
A patrol, ever willing and true.

(*Curtain rises.*)

Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.

Be Prepared is our watchword and slogan,
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.

A Boy Scout's courageous and worthy,
(PINKY *beats time at rear.*)
A Boy Scout is healthy and strong,
They're the hope and pride of the nation,
And they're striving to right every wrong.
Then here's to the order we cherish,
May she conquer and grow day by day,
And here's to the Scout Law and Symbols,
And here's to the B. S. of A.

Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Be Prepared is our watchword and slogan,
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.

FLAP. Sure that's a fine song and a credit to our patrol. And it's a fine lot of singers we are, if I do say it meself.

TUBBY. I'm going to learn how to play that piece on my trombone. I can play two lines of the chorus now, with hardly any mistakes at all.

BUSTER. I wish our uniforms would hurry up and get here. We'll have some great parades when they come.

Enter JUDGE *from R.*

JUDGE. I heard you singing, boys, and it was very good. You'll soon have one of the finest patrols in this part of the country. I don't believe there are any boys anywhere who are braver and manlier than my country Boy Scouts.

SQUIRMY. And there ain't a better Scoutmaster than you are. Three cheers for the Scoutmaster, fellows.

ALL. Rah, rah, rah! Rah, rah, rah! Rah, rah, rah! Scoutmaster!

SQUIRMY. What's the matter with Judge Tolliver?

OTHERS. He's all right.

SQUIRMY. Who's all right?

OTHERS. Judge Tolliver.

JUDGE. I thank you, boys. And now, while I have a few

moments to spare, let us go over the Scout Law. I'll see what progress you have made in the past two or three days. When you took the Scout's oath and were enrolled in the Tenderfoot Class, you pledged your word of honor. What was that pledge, Huck?

HUCK (*comes to C., faces* JUDGE, *folds arms*). That we would do our duty to God and to our country, that we would help other people at all times, and that we would obey the Scout Law. (*Goes back of counter.*)

JUDGE. Squirmy, what is the first Scout Law?

SQUIRMY (*rises, salutes, folds arms*). A Scout is trustworthy. That means that people can depend on us. When a Scout says a thing is so, it *is* so, and when a Scout says he is doing a thing, he does it. (*Salutes and goes back to place.*)

JUDGE. To be dependable means that you must deliver the goods. It means to stand up for the right and to fight for your rights and your country's rights.

FLAP. You bet your life we're dependable. If anybody monkeys with this band, they're going to run up against a buzz saw.

FRECKLES (*at rear, caws three times, flaps his arms, crows like a rooster, then stands on his hands, his feet in the air*).

OTHERS. Look at the circus clown. Hurrah for old Freckles.

JUDGE. Flapjack, what is the second Scout Law?

FLAP (*comes to him, salutes, folds arms*). A Scout is loyal. That means that we must stick to each other and be loyal to our bosses and all other folks.

JUDGE. It means that you must stick together, back to back, shoulder to shoulder. You have a common enemy to fight.

FLAP. Lead me to him. Show him to me. I'll lick the stuffin 'out'n him.

JUDGE. The greatest victory a boy can win is the victory over himself.

ALL. Over himself?

JUDGE. Yes, over his passions, over the selfishness and

meanness inside of his own heart. Micky, what is the next law?

MICKY. A Scout is always helpful. Each of us must try to do a good deed for somebody every day. A Scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout.

JUDGE. And the next law?

FRECKLES. A Boy Scout is courteous, kind to women and children, to the crippled and sick, to the aged and infirm. And also to Chinamen.

JUDGE. What is the next law, Tubby?

TUBBY. A Scout is kind and a friend to animals. I used to play my horn just to make my dog howl, but I don't do that no more. Now I'm always good to all kinds of animals. Last Sunday I kissed the cat.

JUDGE. And the other laws, Lengthy?

LENGTHY. A Scout is obedient, cheerful and thrifty. That means don't grumble or whine and save your money. A Scout is brave, a Scout is clean, a Scout is reverent.

JUDGE. Brave in the face of danger, brave enough to stand up for the right at all times, clean in body, thought and speech, and reverent to God, who made all things beautiful and good. Now, what is the Scout Motto?

ALL. Be Prepared.

HUCK. A Scout should be prepared for anything—to help a brother Scout—to ford a stream—to gather firewood —to help strangers—to know right from wrong—to serve his fellow men, his country and his God—always to be prepared.

ALL (*rise, salute, sing*):

A Boy Scout's courageous and worthy,
A Boy Scout is healthy and strong;
They're the hope and the pride of the nation,
And they're striving to right every wrong.
Then here's to the order we cherish,
May she conquer and grow day by day,
And here's to the Scout Law and Symbols,
And here's to the B. S. of A.

Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Be Prepared is our watchword and slogan,
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.

(*All give the yell of the local patrol.*)

JUDGE. And just to think that only four weeks ago you were having a baseball game here in my supply store, using my breakfast food as baseballs.

TUBBY. And throwing the kike in the tub of vinegar.

FLAP. Whatever became of Mr. Skinsky, Judge?

JUDGE. He went back to the city. I didn't think he was fit company for my boy Norman and I told him so in pretty plain words. So we got rid of him.

TUBBY. Say, Judge, when I get to be a high mucky-muck Boy Scout, can I learn how to play on all kinds of band instruments? I'm just crazy about music. I want to be the leader of a big brass band.

JUDGE. Maybe you will some day, Tubby. In the meantime you must practice. That will make you perfect.

FLAP. I want to be a detecative, Judge. That's why I joined the Scouts. To learn how to be a big detecative just like old Slooch, the terror of the Bad Lands. Gee, he could detect anything.

JUDGE. Well, if there's anything goes wrong here, Flapjack, I'll give you a chance to become a detective.

SQUIRMY. Say, Judge, when will our uniforms be here?

JUDGE. I think the whole equipment will be in in a day or two. Come, now; what do you say to a little hike in the woods?

ALL. Fine and dandy.

JUDGE. All right. Squad, attention. (*They line up like soldiers.*) Forward, march. (*They march around stage, singing chorus of the Scout Song and then march out at L., led by* JUDGE.)

HUCK (*behind counter*). Pinky, how would you like to be a Boy Scout?

PINKY. Who? Me? No, sah. I ain't got no time to be

no Boy Scout. I'se a man, I is. (*Sweeps around rear of stage.*) And besides, I ain't got no time.

HUCK. No time? Why, you don't do anything but sleep and fish and eat.

PINKY. Dat's all I does now, but it's comin' winter time soon. And when old Brother Winter comes along de snow and ice gwine to cover up everything, and old north wind is gwine to howl, Woo! And it's goin' to be cold enough to freeze your gizzard. Den I'se got to do one ob two things. I'se either got to go to work, or I'se got to get married.

HUCK. Married? You ain't old enough to get married.

PINKY. Huh! I is, too. I'se nineteen goin' on thirty-six, and I'se got a girl.

HUCK. Why, Pinky, I should think you'd be ashamed.

PINKY. Ain't nuthin' to be ashamed of. She libs over in Paris, Kentucky. She works in a hotel and makes four dollars a week. If I marries dat old gal I won't never have to work no more.

HUCK. What's her name, Pinky?

PINKY (*acts bashful*). Oh, I don't like to tell her name.

HUCK. Go on, Pinky. I won't tell anyone. Honest, I won't.

PINKY (*acting bashful*). Well, her maiden name is Petunia.

HUCK. Petunia? Petunia what?

PINKY. Her paw's name is Plaster. He's a boss barber in Paris, Kentucky.

HUCK. Her name is Petunia Plaster. And she lives in Paris. Sorter like Plaster of Paris, ain't it, Pinky?

PINKY. She's a nice gal, she is. Kind ob chocolate colored brunette. I never did like no blonde gal, nohow. When she looks at you wid dem eyes, yum, yum! When she squeezes your hand, yum, yum, yum! And when she kisses you wif dem liver lips, oh, boy! Dat gal kin act more lovin' in five minutes dan you-all ever knowed was in de world. I'm gwine over to court her next week.

HUCK. Oh, you're going to court Plaster, are you?

PINKY (*laughs*). Yas, sah, I'm gwine to court Plaster. And when she marries me, I won't neber hab to work no more. Dat's how come I can't jine no Boy Scouts.

HUCK. I think the reason you can't join the Scouts is because you're a coward.

PINKY. Who's a coward? Who's a coward? Boy, I'se de bravest man in dis here whole part ob de country. Dey ain't nuffin can scare me.

HUCK. Did you say nothin'?

PINKY. Dat's what I said—nuffin. I hain't afraid ob no man, and I hain't afraid ob no woman, nor no dawg, ner nothin'.

HUCK (*comes to him*). You ain't?

PINKY. No, sah, I'se a brave man, I is.

HUCK (*grasps his arm*). How about a ghost, Pink?

PINKY. How about what?

HUCK. That haunt down cellar, way over in the dark corner? The one that goes Woo! Woo! Ain't you afraid of that?

PINKY (*nervously twists around*). No, course I hain't. I hain't 'fraid of no old ghostesses, ner nothin'. Say, you hain't seen it lately, is you?

HUCK. Yes, I did. I heard it this afternoon. I went down after some vinegar, and I heard it just as plain as anything.

PINKY (*sets barrel on trap*). Let me set dis yere barrel on de trap door. Ob course I hain't afraid ob no ghost, but I don't like to hab nothin' to do with 'em, dat's all.

HUCK. That old ghost down cellar seems to get worse each time I go down. The first time I heard him was about a month ago, the day we threw the man in the tub of vinegar. The ghost only grunted a little that day. But you orter heard him this afternoon.

PINKY (*trembling*). What did he do this afternoon, Huck?

HUCK. He riz right up and shook himself, and I heard him holler and heard chains rattle and smelt blood.

PINKY (*very much frightened*). Hush, boy, hush! He's liable to hear you.

HUCK. Here, I got to nail a top on this barrel. (*Points to barrel over trap.*) Wait till I get the hammer. (*Gets it.*) You hold the board. (*Nails board on, hits finger.*) Ouch! (*Dances around.*)

PINKY. Lemme see, lemme see. (*Takes* HUCK'S *finger, starts to put it in his mouth,* HUCK *gives him a back hander and* PINKY *falls on a box, then starts up with a yell.*)

HUCK. What's the matter?

PINKY (*hopping around*). Lawsy, lawsy; I done set on a nail. Where's de arnica bottle? (*Rushes out at R.*)

HUCK. It's under the sink. (*Exits R.*)

Enter WUN *from L.*

WUN. Bad boys chase poor Chinee. Me hide in barrel. (*Gets in barrel.*)

Enter PINKY *from R., followed by* HUCK.

HUCK (*back of counter at R.*). So you'd better look out, Pinky Pinfeathers, and not bother that ghost down in the cellar. Ghosts don't like niggers nohow.

PINKY (*leaning against barrel*). And Lawd knows niggers don't like ghosts. But I ain't afraid ob him, no sah. If I was to see him I'd jest walk right up to him and hit him on the shoulder and say—(WUN *reaches through bunghole and pulls* PINKY'S *leg.*) Good Lawdy, Mistah Ghost, I didn't mean it; I didn't mean it. (*Hysterically kneels at C.*) Save me, save me! I didn't say nothin'. It wasn't me—it was him.

HUCK (*crosses to him*). Why, what's the matter, Pinky?

PINKY (*trembling and with chattering teeth*). Didn't you see it?

HUCK. See what?

PINKY. De ghost.

HUCK. Naw, you're full of prunes.

PINKY. Dat dog-goned ghost reached clean up from de cellar, out'n de barrel and pulled me.

HUCK. It's your imagination. Wait till I get a light. (*Gets a candle.*)

PINKY. I don't need no light. I'm goin' home.

HUCK (*brings lighted candle to bung-hole*). You see, there's nothing there. (WUN *blows out the candle.*)

PINKY (*looking at it*). Oh, lawsy, lawsy, lawsy! (*Kneels again.*) I smell him dat time.

HUCK. It was the wind. Now, Pinky, I want to see how brave you are. Get up and go and look in that barrel.

PINKY. No, sah. I ain't gwine near dat ole barrel.

HUCK (*gets revolver from counter, points it at* PINKY). Hurry up.

PINKY (*suddenly turns toward* HUCK *and sees revolver pointed at him.*) Good-night! My last hour has come.

HUCK. Now you go over and look in that barrel.

PINKY (*trembling, rises*). Has I got to do it?

HUCK (*comes to him and pushes revolver at his back*). You sure have.

PINKY. Well, lemme go easy, lemme go easy. (*Sneaks tremblingly to the barrel.*) Jest like a mouse. (*Turns to* HUCK.) Say, Huck, don't make me do it. Please, don't. How's I ever gwine to get married if dat ghost done catches me?

HUCK (*pokes him with revolver*). Hurry up. Look in the barrel.

PINKY. Well, if I must, I must. (*Looks in barrel.* WUN *pulls his nose.*) Oh, lawsy, lawsy, lawsy! (*Runs to R. and kneels.*) He pulled my nose. It's all over but de shoutin'. Oh, please, Mr. Ghost, lemme alone. I'se only a poor little nigger orphan boy wif only one mother and father. Help, help! (WUN *goes down through trap.*)

HUCK. There's somebody in that barrel.

PINKY. Yas, sah, dere's dat old ghost in de barrel.

HUCK (*points revolver at barrel*). Well, then, I'm a-goin' to shoot the ghost.

PINKY. Oh, lawsy, lawsy, lawsy, Huck, please don't hab no trouble wif dat ghost. He'll catch the bullet in his teeth and throw it right back at you.

HUCK. I'll show you I ain't afraid. Now, then, one, two three. (*Fires revolver at barrel.*)

PINKY. Lawsy, dat old ghost kill dis yere whole town. I certainly wishes I was back wif my Petunia Plaster in good old Paris, Kentucky.

HUCK. I'll bet we've killed the ghost. Come here.

PINKY (*positively*). No, sah. I prefers to stay right here.

HUCK (*turns barrel toward audience, showing nothing in it.*) Well, what do you think of that?

PINKY (*picking a smouldering rag from the barrel*). You'd done shot old Mistah Ghost and dere ain't nuffin left but his shirt-tail.

HUCK. I'm going down cellar and see if I really did kill the ghost. (*Exits R.*)

PINKY. And while de boss am gone I'm gwine to hab a free lunch. (*Takes a large piece of pie from counter. Puts barrel over trap. Sits on barrel.* WUN *comes up through the trap and gets in barrel. Comedy Coon Song may be introduced by* PINKY *at this point.*) I's gwine to work around here till I save up six bits and den I's gwine to Paris, Kentucky, and court Plaster. She ain't got so very much money, but I don't care, dere's lots ob girls as poor as Plaster. I said as pore as Plaster. Porous Plaster (*Laughs.*) I said as pore as Plaster. (*Laughs. After a slight pause* WUN *repeats the laugh.* PINKY'S *face changes from merriment to anxiety. Still sitting on the barrel he looks cautiously around, then laughs again.*) Ha, ha, ha!

WUN (*in barrel*). Ha, ha, ha!

PINKY. Lawsy, lawsy, lawsy, he's done come back again.

WUN (*upsets the barrel*).

(PINKY *falls off and runs about frightened.* WUN, *still in the barrel, runs about after him, with barrel over his head.* PINKY *kneels down R. and starts to pray.* WUN *throws the barrel over* PINKY'S *head and runs out at L.* PINKY *yells.*)

Enter HUCK *from R.*

PINKY (*rolls over like dead.*) Oh, lawsy, lawsy, lawsy! (*Groans.*)

HUCK. What's the matter? What were you trying to do with that barrel?

PINKY. Oh, I's a dead nigger. I's a gone coon. Put a tombstone at my head and at my feet and carry me to the graveyard right away.

HUCK. Get up. (*Pulls him to his feet.*) Now, what's the matter with you? Have you been drinking nigger gin again?

PINKY. No, sah. Say, Huck, am I alive?

HUCK. I'll stick a pin in you and see. (*He does so,* PINKY *yells.*)

PINKY. Yas, sah; I'm alive all right. Dat old ghost done come up from the cellar, jumped right through dat barrel and lighted right on top of me. He was about 'leven million miles high and breathed out smoke and brimstone. He pulled me all around dis yere store, den slammed dat barrel down on my head and jumped out right through dat 'ere ceiling. Man, man, I'm sure gwine to pack my trunk and move over to dat good old Paris, Kentucky.

HUCK. Humph, there wasn't any ghost down cellar at all.

PINKY. No, sah, I knows dat. He was up yere yankin me clean to Kingdom Come.

HUCK. I went over in the corner to see what the noise was and I found a nest of young mice. They were our ghosts, Pink

PINKY. No, sah. You can't fool me. There hain't no nest of young mice gwine to jump up here through dat barrel and pulverize me; no, sah! It was ghostesses. I heard 'em, and I smelled 'em, and I seen 'em.

Enter JUDGE *from L.*

JUDGE. Huck, where's Norman?

HUCK. I don't know, sir. He was here about noon.

PINKY (*down L.*). He went out walkin' down by the ribber wif dat Mr. Skinsky.

JUDGE. Is Skinsky here?

PINKY. Yas, sah. He rode over about noon in a automobile.

JUDGE. Pinky, walk down by the river and tell my son that I want to see him at once.

PINKY. Yas, sah. Gwine right away, sah. (*Exit L.*)

JUDGE. Huck, I want a word with you.

HUCK (*comes from behind counter and crosses to* JUDGE *at C.*). Yes, sir.

JUDGE. I am sorry to say, Huck, that on two occasions during the past four weeks I have found a deficiency in the money drawer. Someone has been taking small sums of money from the cash drawer. The first time I missed eight dollars, the second time twelve dollars. You are sure you have locked the drawer every night?

HUCK. Yes, sir. I always try it the last thing before I leave.

JUDGE. You never found the lock broken or tampered with, have you?

HUCK. No, sir.

JUDGE. There are only three keys to that drawer. I have one and you and Norman each have one.

HUCK. Say, boss, you don't think I stole that money, do you?

JUDGE. I hardly think so, Huck.

HUCK. Well, I didn't. You're the only man who's ever given me a kind word in all my life. You're the only one who's ever given me a chance. And besides, Judge, I'm a Boy Scout—and Boy Scouts don't steal.

JUDGE (*takes his hand*). I believe you, my boy; I believe you. You don't suspect anyone, do you?

HUCK. No, sir. I feel sure that none of the gang took the money. That much I'm sure of. And dad's been in jail for three weeks, so he couldn't have took it.

JUDGE. How about Pinky?

HUCK. Folks is mostly agin Pinky, Judge, 'cause he's black. But I know him—and I know his heart is white. Pinky never stole that money.

JUDGE. It's a mystery. Maybe some of the Boy Scouts

can unravel it. (*Crosses to R.*) Tell Norman I want to see him as soon as he comes in. (*Exits R.*)

HUCK (*after a slight pause*). I know none of the fellers around here took that money. Maybe it was the ghost, though I don't see what a ghost would want with money.

Enter FLAP, *disguised as a girl.*

FLAP (*crosses to counter*). Hello.

HUCK (*behind counter*). Hello, sis. What you want?

FLAP. You got any condemned milk?

HUCK. Condemned milk? Naw, we don't have that kind of milk.

FLAP. You do, too. There's a lot of it there on that shelf.

HUCK. That's condensed milk, sister.

FLAP. That's what I said—condemned milk.

HUCK. Not condemned milk—condensed milk.

FLAP. Oh, I didn't know there was any difference.

HUCK. How many cans do you want?

FLAP. I don't want none. I just wanted to know if you had it. Gimme four cents worth of red candy.

HUCK. Peppermint?

FLAP. Yep, red and white stripes.

HUCK (*gives him small sack of candy*). There you are.

FLAP (*searching pockets*). I know I had some money when I started, but I reckon I lost it. Say, will you take a couple of stamps in pay for this candy?

HUCK. Sure, it's all the same to me.

FLAP (*stamps twice with his foot*). There's one stamp, and there's two. By, by, buddy.

HUCK (*runs out and grabs* FLAP). Hold on. You've got to pay for that candy.

FLAP. I'll give you two kisses and a hug.

HUCK. Nothing doing. You'll give me four cents or you don't get no candy. (*Grabs his arm.*)

FLAP (*trying to get away*). You lemme go, lemme go. (*They struggle,* HUCK *pulls* FLAP'S *sunbonnet off, showing him who it really is.*)

HUCK. Well, I'll be blowed. Flapjack!

FLAP. Hush! Don't tell anybody. I'm in disguise.

HUCK. What you in disguise for?

FLAP. I'm a detecative, and detecatives always go 'round in disguise.

HUCK. Who are you going to detect?

FLAP. Oh, that don't make no difference. I'm just waiting for someone to commit a crime.

HUCK. What kind of a crime?

FLAP. Why, counterfeiting, or murder, or kidnapping, or robbery.

HUCK. Suppose there had been a robbery committed, how would you start about finding the thief?

FLAP. I'd shadow him in disguise. That's the way they always do in books.

HUCK. But suppose you didn't know who he was?

FLAP. Then I'd just hang around where he was liable to do some robbing, and when he did, I'd nab him.

HUCK. But suppose he was bigger than you?

FLAP. Oh, I'd catch him. I'd lay a trap for him.

Enter NORMAN *and* MOE *from L.*

MOE. But I tell you I von't be put off no longer. I von't stand it, so help me Isaac.

NORMAN. Hush! Huck, why don't you wait on this little girl?

FLAP. He did. I guess you all hain't got what I want.

NORMAN. What is it you want?

FLAP. I want a beau. That's what I want. How would you like to be my beau?

NORMAN. Don't be impertinent, little girl.

FLAP. Don't you be impertinent, little boy. (*Snaps finger at him.*) That for you. (*Exits L.*)

HUCK. Norman, your father wanted me to tell you that he wanted to see you as soon as you came in.

NORMAN. Go and tell him that I'll come over to see him pretty soon.

HUCK. Yes, sir. (*Exits R.*)

MOE (*down L.*). Now you got a plenty of money, und here I am und I ain't got a cent, und you owing me thirty dollars more.

NORMAN. I haven't got any money. I tell you father keeps me strapped all the time.

MOE. I ain't here to listen to no foolishness. Vot I vant is money, und dot's just vot I'm going to get. For vy do you suppose I lended you forty dollars, if I didn't expect to get fifty back. Und all I've got so far is tventy, a eight und a twelve. Und I've vaited almost a month yet already.

NORMAN. I haven't got any money now and that's an end of it.

MOE. Oh, no, it ain't der end of it at all. Either you pay me thirty dollars today or I go to your father und tell him dot I loaned you forty dollars to pay your debts in the city, und dot you stole tventy dollars from him to pay me back.

NORMAN. How do you know I stole twenty dollars?

MOE. Vere else vould you get it?

NORMAN. I got it from the store here. I'm the manager of the store, ain't I?

MOE. Vell, if it's so easy to get, vy don't you go ahead and get the other thirty.

NORMAN. Because my father suspects something is wrong. I can tell by the way he acts.

MOE. If it's your own money, it ain't none of his business. Come on, now, I ain't got so much time. Go ahead und get me my thirty dollars from der cash drawer, und let me go back to the city.

NORMAN. Father knows how much money we have on hand. He watches the cash drawer like a hawk lately. Honest, Mr. Skinsky, I can't pay you anything today. Maybe I can let you have two or three dollars next week.

MOE. Vot? *Vot?* Me vait another veek. I von't do it. I von't vait another day, so help me Isaac.

NORMAN. If you go to father you won't get any money at all, and you'll get me in a lot of trouble.

MOE (*comes closer to him*). I'll tell you vot to do.

NORMAN. Well, what is it?

MOE. I got a little scheme, und it's just as easy as passing a counterfeit dollar at a county fair. Now vot you vant to do is to take the thirty dollars out of the drawer

and make your father believe that it was someone else vot took it.

NORMAN. But—

MOE. Vait a minute. It's awful easy. You got a boy vorking here vot's a reg'lar tramp. I don't like him no-how. He threw me in a tub of vinegar last month. Now all you got to do is to make der old man think dot he took the money, then you can pay me the thirty dollars und you von't never have no more trouble with me.

NORMAN. Do you think I'd do a thing like that?

MOE. It's plenty easy. You won't get caught. Der old man will blame the boy and send him to jail. How about it?

NORMAN. I won't do it. I was a fool when I borrowed that forty dollars of you to pay off my debts, and I was a fool for not telling father. I may have been a fool, Moe Skinsky, but I'm not low down enough to steal thirty dollars and blame it on an innocent boy.

MOE. Then you von't do it.

NORMAN. No, I won't.

MOE. Then let me do it. Let me go right over there now to the money drawer und get my thirty dollars. I can catch the night train und nobody will know vot become of the money.

NORMAN. I won't do it. You shan't rob my father.

MOE. It ain't robbery. You owe me the money, und I'd just be collecting my honest debt. If you are the manager of the store, don't some of the money belong to you?

NORMAN (*hesitates*). Yes—I suppose it does.

MOE. Then vot's der difference?

NORMAN. It wouldn't be right.

MOE. I suppose you'd rather have me go to your father und tell him dot you already stole twenty dollars for me since you been working here, but that you ain't goin' to pay me der other thirty dollars, would you?

NORMAN. No, father mustn't know. Can't you trust me? I'll pay you every cent in a couple of months.

MOE. Oh, no; dot ain't business. Here I come all der vay from der city to collect mine honest debts, und you

von't pay me. (*Starts toward R.*) I'm goin' to have a talk mit your father, so help me Isaac.

NORMAN (*stands in the way*). No, you are not.

MOE. Then you've got to let me get the money.

NORMAN. Father would miss it when he balances his accounts tonight.

MOE. Vell, I'll vait till after he balances them. You leave the door unlocked und leave thirty dollars in der box, und little Moe Skinsky vill do the rest. (*Pause.*) Vill you?

NORMAN. And what if I don't?

MOE. Then right avay straight to your father I will go.

NORMAN. I'll do it. You come back after dark and you'll find thirty dollars in the money drawer.

MOE. Und leave the door unlocked. It ain't healthy for a man like me to climb in der window. It ain't, so help me Isaac.

NORMAN. Yes, I'll leave the door unlocked. Now, you'd better go before my father sees you and begins to suspect something.

MOE (*crosses to L.*). All right, I'll go. But if you don't leave me get dot money tonight I'll have you arrested und put in jail, so help me Isaac. (*Exits L.*)

NORMAN. Oh, why did I ever go to that man to borrow money? I have been his tool, and now he wants me to rob my own father and put the blame on an innocent boy. This has taught me a lesson. I'll never go into debt again as long as I live.

Enter JUDGE *from R.*

JUDGE. Norman, I've been wanting to speak to you.

NORMAN. Yes, sir.

JUDGE. It's about some money that I have found missing from the cash drawer. On two occasions the receipts did not tally with the amount of goods sold.

NORMAN. How much was missing?

JUDGE. At one time I missed eight dollars and at another time twelve dollars. There are three keys to the drawer. I have one, you have one and Huck has one.

NORMAN (*angrily*). You don't think I took the money, do you?

JUDGE. I have not accused you. I know that Huck has always had a bad reputation in the neighborhood, but since he has joined the Boy Scouts there has been a wonderful reformation in his character.

NORMAN. Maybe the money was just lost or mislaid.

JUDGE. That might have happened once, but it would not happen twice in four weeks. No, Norman, somebody has stolen that twenty dollars.

NORMAN. How about the colored janitor.

JUDGE. I don't think Pinky took it. And besides he hasn't any key to the cash drawer, and the lock has never been tampered with. Do you think Huck took the money?

NORMAN (*hesitates, looks down, pauses, then speaks* slowly). I—don't—know.

JUDGE. Do you think Huck is a thief?

NORMAN. No, sir, I don't.

JUDGE. Norman, did you take that money?

NORMAN (*stammers slowly*). I—I—I—

JUDGE. Speak, my son, did you take that twenty dollars?

NORMAN (*looks at* JUDGE, *then pauses and looks guiltily down at the floor*).

JUDGE (*after a pause*). Did you?

NORMAN. Yes, father, I took the money.

JUDGE (*surprised*). You? My son a thief? A thief! (*Sinks in chair at R.*)

NORMAN. I'll pay it back, honest, I will. Every cent. I didn't mean to steal it, exactly. I just needed that much, so I borrowed it. I'll save every cent I earn and pay it back.

JUDGE. Why did you need twenty dollars, Norman?

NORMAN. I needed it—well, I needed it for—(*pauses*). I just needed it.

JUDGE. I won't question you any farther. I have started you up in business here, Norman, and you may handle your financial affairs to suit yourself. But I must insist on your paying back that twenty dollars.

NORMAN. I'll do it. I'll pay every cent of it.

JUDGE. You earn a good salary now and are manager of this store. I want to develop your power to take care of yourself. We'll say nothing more about this, then.

NORMAN. I'll try to do better, father, and I'll never take another cent that doesn't belong to me as long as I live.

JUDGE (*takes his hand*). I believe you, my boy, and I'll watch you grow into a strong, honest, reliable man with all the pride of a father's heart.

Enter HUCK *from R.*

HUCK. Is it time to close up, Judge?

JUDGE (*looks at his watch*). It's nearly nine o'clock. We should have closed an hour ago. You'd better get to bed early, Huck. The whole patrol is going on a nine-mile hike at five o'clock in the morning. Come, Norman. (*Exits R.*)

NORMAN. How much money in the cash drawer, Huck?

HUCK (*back of counter*). About forty dollars. Just $38.75.

NORMAN. Give me the $8.75 and leave the thirty in the cash drawer.

HUCK. All right. There you are. (*Hands him small sack.*)

NORMAN. Be sure and lock the cash drawer, Huck.

HUCK. Sure thing. I always locks the cash drawer.

NORMAN. There might be a robbery tonight. There's no telling what might happen.

HUCK (*locks drawer*). There, she's locked. Everything is all ready to close up now.

NORMAN. Are you going out?

HUCK. Yes, I thought I'd go over to Flapjack's a little while.

NORMAN. He's the funny Irish boy who wants to be a detective, isn't he?

HUCK. Yep. That's him. I was asking him how he would catch a desperate robber or something, and he said he'd set a trap for him. Is that the way the detecatives do?

NORMAN. Sure, Huck. That's the best way there is. Are you going to be a detective, too?

HUCK. Who, me? Naw, I ain't got sense enough for that. But I reckon I could set a trap. That's easy—anybody can set a trap.

NORMAN. Do you want me to lock up for you?

HUCK. Naw, I guess I won't go over to Flapjack's. I just wanted to know about that trap. I'll lock up and then go to bed, so's I can get up early in the morning for the hike.

NORMAN. Good night. (*Exit R.*)

HUCK. 'Night. (*Arranges store for the night.*) I wonder what's become of Pinky. If he don't get here pretty soon, he'll be locked out, and then he'll have to sleep with the mules in the barn.

PINKY *sticks his head in at window.*

PINKY. Who'll have to sleep with the mules?

HUCK. You will if you don't hurry up and get in here.

Enter PINKY *at L.*

PINKY. Well, lemme in. I ain't got no desirability to sleep with no mules.

HUCK. Say, Pinky, have you got that old skunk trap we used to use last winter?

PINKY. Yas, sah. It's up in de loft under ma bed. What you want it for?

HUCK. Thought I'd try and catch a skunk.

PINKY. Ain't no skunks 'round here no more. And 'sides dis ain't de time of year for skunks.

HUCK. Maybe I'll catch something else. Will you lend it to me?

PINK. 'Course I'll lend it. Say, Huck, I'll bet you's gwine to try and catch dat ghost.

HUCK. Maybe I am. Lock the door and fasten the window. I got to get to bed and get up at five o'clock in the morning for the Boy Scout's hike.

PINKY. I's done locked de door and fastened de window. Say, I reckon I'd better set dat barrel over dat trap, kase if I don't dat old ghost is liable to disturb ma peacefulness; he shore am.

HUCK. I'll go up with you and get the trap. I might want to use it in the morning.

PINKY. Well, if you does ketch dat old ghost in it, jest hold him tight till I gets dere. Kase when I does, I'm a gwine to kick seven thousand kinds of lightning out'n him, I shore am. (*Exits R.*)

HUCK. All right, Pinky. (*Exit R., carrying lamp. The stage is in darkness.*)

After a slight pause HUCK *re-enters from R. carrying a steel trap and followed by* PINKY *carrying a lamp.*

PINKY. What you gwine to bait it with, Huck? I dunno what bait is good for a ghost.

HUCK. Hold the light here. (*At money drawer.*) I'm going to put the trap in the money drawer.

PINKY. I neber heard ob a ghost goin' after a money drawer. Say, Huck, hurry up. It's dark yere and kind ob spookatorious. All ma bravery jes' naturally vanishes in the darkness ob de night.

HUCK (*grasps his arm*). Sh! Listen!

PINKY. Oh, lawsy, lawsy, I's so skeerd dat I's turning pale clean down to ma toes.

HUCK. Someone is coming down the stairs. Turn out the light and hide under the counter. (*They do so.*)

PINKY. If it's dat old ghost den it's good night, nigger. Did you put de trap in de drawer?

HUCK. No, I have it here. Sh! Lay low. Somebody's coming in here.

PINKY (*groans*).

HUCK. Hush!

Enter NORMAN *from R. carrying dark lantern. He crosses to window and tries it.*

NORMAN. It's locked. (*Opens window.*) Skinsky told me to leave it open. And to leave the cash drawer unlocked. (*Goes to cash drawer, takes out roll of bills.*) Ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty. Just the right amount. (*Replaces bills in drawer.*) I'll leave the drawer unlocked, and then, after

he's gone, I'll slip down and lock it up again. Tomorrow the thirty dollars will be gone, but I'll be done with Moe Skinsky forever. (*At door R.*) And I'll never borrow another cent as long as I live. (*Exit R.*)

HUCK (*appears at C.*). Light the lamp, Pinky.

PINKY. I's too scared to light anything. I guess I'll light out for good old Paris, Kentucky.

HUCK. Who was that?

PINKY. Dat was the ghost.

HUCK. He opened the money drawer.

PINKY. Did he steal the money?

HUCK. No, here it is, just like I left it. Now, I'll put this trap right on top, and if anyone touches the money they'll get caught in the trap.

PINKY. Yas, but dey'll git away and carry de money and de trap away with them.

HUCK. Oh, no, they won't. You see this string. I'm going to tie one end to the trap.

PINKY. What you gwine to do with the other end?

HUCK. I'm going to run the string up the stairs and tie the other end to your great big toe.

PINKY. To my great big toe. Oh, lawsy, lawsy, I's a dead nigger sure.

HUCK. Then, when the burglar springs the trap, the string will pull your toe and we'll come down and catch the burglar. See how easy it is.

PINKY. It sounds easy, but dat old trap is liable to pull by big toe clean off'n my anatomy. For goodness sakes, Huck, tie it easy.

HUCK. There! Everything is all right now. We'll see if we don't catch a skunk in the trap before morning. Come on. (*Exit R.*)

PINKY. Dis here doings is mighty dangerous. If dat old toe pulls out, it's good night, Mr. Nigger. (*Exits R.*)

After a pause MOE *is heard fumbling at window. He opens it and looks in. Flashes dark lantern all around room. Pause. He climbs in at the window.*

MOE (*flashing his light around stage*). Vell, he left der

vindow open for me all right, und everybody seems to have gone to bed. This vill be an easy job. It vill, so help me Isaac! I'll just take charge of dot thirty dollars und catch der midnight train for the city. (*Goes behind counter.*) Here's der money drawer all right, und it ain't locked. I'm a lucky Israelite, I am. All I've got to do is to slip my hand in and—Owww! (*He springs the trap in the money drawer, using a small stick for the purpose. This stick is not seen by the audience.*) Oh, I'm killed, I'm killed. (*Jumps around stage, screaming with pain.*)

Enter from R. HUCK *and* PINKY *wearing night-shirts.* PINKY *wears a night-cap tied with strings under his chin.*

HUCK (*jumps on* MOE *and throws him down at C.*) A light! A light! Bring a light. I've caught a skunk.

PINKY (*helps* HUCK *hold* MOE *to floor*). Lawsy massy, we's caught a ghost.

MOE. Let me up. I'm killed, so help me Isaac.

PINKY. Lawsy, lawsy, it's a Jew ghost.

Enter from R. JUDGE *and* NORMAN, *wearing dressing gowns and carrying lamps. Lights all up.*

JUDGE. What's the matter? What is it, Huck? Who have you got?

HUCK (*at C.*). Me? I've got a skunk, that's all. And he's trapped, by jingo.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: *The same as Acts I and II. An afternoon several months later than Act II. The grocery store is in good order, the boxes and barrels that occupied the center of the stage in the two previous acts have been removed and the counter shoved back as far as possible. A rope on a pulley is at rear C. On this rope is an American flag, but the flag is concealed from the audience by a chair or box.* JUDGE *is seated at R.* MR. M. *at L. Bright music*

takes up the curtain, but stops as soon as characters speak. Lights on full throughout the act.

JUDGE. I certainly am glad to see you again, Mr. McCloskey.

MR. M. I had a day's vacation, so I thought I'd make a little visit here in the country. Things look pretty prosperous.

JUDGE. Yes, indeed. I have nothing to complain of.

MR. M. Ever had any trouble with the boys?

JUDGE. Not at all. They're all Boy Scouts now, and no one ever has any trouble with Boy Scouts.

MR. M. What became of Gypsy Jake?

JUDGE. He died about a month ago.

MR. M. And his boy, Huckleberry—what became of him?

JUDGE. He's still here working for me at the store.

MR. M. Pretty tough kid, ain't he?

JUDGE. Far from it. He's the patrol leader of my Scouts and my right-hand man. He's one of the finest, most honorable young fellows I've ever met. Next year I'm going to send him to college.

MR. M. You don't say. Why he used to be the toughest kid in the county.

JUDGE. That was because he never had a chance. I've given him that chance, and I'm proud to say I've made a man of him.

MR. M. How's your own boy getting along?

JUDGE. There's been a wonderful change in Norman's character. He's joined the Boy Scouts and is living up to the Scout oath in every particular. It was a lucky day for me when I took him away from the temptations of the city and brought him here to the country. He's going to college with Huck in the fall.

Mr. M. Well, I never thought you'd succeed. But you have, and you're all right.

JUDGE. My success is due to the fact that I trusted my boys. I trusted them and I helped them. Some day they'll grow into big, honest, fearless men, a credit to their country

and their God. Then I'll know that my work has not been in vain.

MR. M. Whatever became of that colored roustabout, Pinky Pinfeathers?

JUDGE (*laughs*). Oh, Pinky was more difficult to manage. He ran away about four months ago. He said he was going to Paris, Kentucky, and get married. That was the last we heard from Pinky Pinfeathers.

MR. M. (*laughs*). Married, eh? I suppose he wanted a wife to support him.

PINKY *looks in at the window.*

JUDGE. I suppose so. But if he ever returns, I'll do the best I can for him.

Enter PINKY *from L.*

PINKY. Boss, I has returned.

JUDGE (*rises, much surprised*). Why, Pinky, where did you drop from?

PINKY. Right out ob heaven, boss.

MR. M. Out of heaven? Then you're a long ways from headquarters.

JUDGE. I thought you got married, Pinky.

PINKY. Dat's right, Judge, I did get married. And dat was de one fatal mistake ob ma bright young life.

JUDGE. A mistake, eh? Wasn't your married life happy?

PINKY. Boss, my married life was so unhappy dat I runned away from ma bride four days after de wedding.

MR. M. (*down L.*). What was the trouble, Pinky?

PINKY. Well, sah, in de first place ma bride weighed two hundred and fifty pounds.

JUDGE. Quite a large lady, wasn't she?

PINKY. Large? *Large?* Boss, she was more'n large. She was ponderous. But dat was only de beginning. Secondly, she had a wooden leg.

JUDGE. You don't tell me.

PINKY. Yas, sah. There I was married to half a woman and half a tree. Dat was enough to rouse the risibilities ob any 'spectable colored man. But de climax come

one night when she banged me over de head wid dat old wooden leg. Dat's a thing I ain't gwine to stand in no bride. So I runned away, and here I is all ready to go back to work.

JUDGE. Do you want your old place back again?

PINKY. Yas, sah.

JUDGE. Well, I think I'll try you once more. But you mustn't run away and get married again.

PINKY. No, sah, no, sah. I wouldn't marry de most handsome and most richest woman in de state ob Kentucky. I wouldn't marry her if she had sixty dollars in de bank. I's a bachelor now for de rest ob ma days.

JUDGE. Well, if that's the case, you can come back to work. (*To* MR. M.) You see, Pinky helped us to catch a burglar one time.

MR. M. So you had a burglary, did you?

JUDGE. Yes, a man from New York tried to rob the money drawer, but Huck and Pinky were too sharp for him. Huck put a steel trap in the money drawer and caught the burglar in the very act.

MR. M. Did you have him arrested?

JUDGE. No. I thought that under the circumstances we'd better let him go. He'll never trouble us again.

MR. M. I think I'll go over and take a look at the mines.

JUDGE. I'll go with you for a little while. The Boy Scouts are getting ready for an exhibition drill for a church benefit. They're going to practice in here pretty soon and I have a little surprise for them.

MR. M. A surprise?

JUDGE. Yes. I'm going to present them with an American flag, the symbol of their country's honor. But come, let us go over to the mines. (*Exit L. with* MR. M.)

PINKY. Lawsy, it does seem natural to be sagatiating 'round here once more. It's de same old place. I wonder is dey ever caught dat old ghost dat reached clean up from de cellar through de barrel and nearly battered ma head off. I don't care. I'm so happy to be back again dat I could

sing and dance all day long. (*Specialty may be introduced at this point.*)

Enter WUN *from L.*

WUN. Hello, blackee.

PINKY. Well, you kin shoot me dead wif a bowie knife, if it ain't my old friend Pigtail. (*Shakes hands with him.*) Glad to see you, Wun Lung Loo. How's Mrs. Loo and all de little Looies?

WUN. All velly well. Heap much good time here now. No more bad boys. All good boys now. Me velly much pleased. You come down street and I buy you glass soda pop. Me velly good Chinaman now.

PINKY. Lawsy, lawsy, I ain't had no soda pop since de last time. Say, where's Huckleberry?

WUN. He allee samee Boy Scout now. Boy Scouts have big parade down the street.

PINKY. Is dey gwine to hab a parade?

WUN. Heap much marchee. (*Imitates marching.*) Hep, hep, hep. Shootee nigger if he don't keep step.

PINKY. Come on, Pigtail. We's shore got to see de excitement. (*Exit L.*)

WUN. Me hurry allee samee fast like a mule. (*Exit L.*)

THE MARCH OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

(*Music: Any march played in strict tempo.*)

Enter from R. twelve or sixteen Boy Scouts in full uniform, each carrying a staff. They march in couples once around the stage, staffs held over right shoulders.

(a) March once around stage in large square, single file, turning corners sharply. Then once around in a circle. While marching, mark the circle smaller and smaller until all face toward its center, elevate staffs to form a cone and march around. About face. March once around.

(b) Down to center front in couples, cast off in couples, meet at rear and down to front four abreast. Cast off again and meet at rear and down to front eight abreast (if sixteen boys are used), or six abreast (if twelve).

(c) Spread out. Staffs held in both hands. Overhead, raise! (Placing left foot backward.) Repeat four times. Jump lightly as staffs are lowered.

(d) Stand astride of wands. Swing arms forward and on toes rise. Swing arms backward and bend knees. Swing arms forward and jump forward. Repeat, jumping backward. All in strict time to music.

(e) Still astride of wands. Swing arms forward and rise on toes. Swing arms backward and bend knees. Swing arms forward, clap hands, jump and strike heels together. Come to position. Repeat.

(f) The front row side-step to R. and L. with staffs held at shoulder arms. The rear row form a pyramid with their staffs.

(g) The bugler enters and stands at R. front. He blows "Reveille."

(h) Music changes to "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."

Boys all sing:

SCOUT SONG.

Oh, the Boy Scouts have captured the country,
From the Gulf to the Lakes everywhere,
From the east to the west they are loyal,
Ever ready to do and to dare.
And wherever our flag proudly flutters
'Neath the folds of the red, white and blue,
You'll find there a band of brave fellows,
A patrol ever willing and true.

Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.
Be Prepared is our watchword and slogan,
Three cheers for the B. S. of A.

HUCK. Break ranks. (*They break ranks.*) Now, fellows, let's off with our coats and have some circus exercises, just to keep in training for our exhibition.

Enter PINKY *from R.*

PINKY. Hello, boys. I's done come back.

ALL. Three cheers for Pinky Pinfeathers. (*They give the cheers.*)

HUCK. Where's your wife, Pinky?

PINKY. Don't mention dat woman's name to me neber no more. I's a good, old, happy bachelor once more. (*Looks at them.*) My, my, you all certainly do look scrumptious. Look like shore enough soldiers.

HUCK. We are soldiers. The mightiest army in the world. The Boy Scouts.

NORMAN. Come on, fellows; let's get ready for our circus stunts. (*Bright circus music.*)

WUN *enters and with* PINKY *act as clowns while the Boy Scouts start their*

CIRCUS DRILL.

All the boys stand close together facing L. in straight line. Each boy places left hand between his legs and takes the right hand of the boy behind. Last boy lies down with feet close together and between legs of the boy in front of him. The whole file walks astride slowly backward. When the next to the last boy can fit his feet into the shoulders of the boy already down he lies down, etc. When the entire line is down the last boy starts back astride across the line of boys and pulls up the next one behind him, etc., until all are up again. They have not let go of hands since they started.

WHEELBARROW RACE.

March to back of stage and across by twos, face the front and the formation is two long ranks. First rank places hands to the floor. Second rank picks up the heels of the first rank, who stiffen their backs to avoid any strain. First rank sets the pace and all move forward in time to music. Exchange positions and repeat.

LEAP FROG RACE.

Face left, march by twos; come up center by fours, halting about center of stage, all hands to the floor. Last boy in each file leaps over each boy in his file in turn. When

he passes third boy, the next one at the back starts. When each boy passes front, he spaces and places hands to floor.

PUNTING.

Four boys stand on barrels and try to dismount each other with long poles. The ends of the poles are heavily padded with excelsior and cloth.

STUNTS.

1. High jump over a cord.
2. Tumbling.
3. Forming pyramids.

(*Music ceases.*)

Enter JUDGE *and* MR. M. *from L.*

JUDGE. Boys, I have a little surprise for you. I have intended for some time to make our patrol a little present and it arrived this morning.

SQUIRMY. Three cheers for our Scoutmaster. (*The cheers are given.*)

JUDGE. I have decided to present the patrol with an American flag, to instill in your breasts love and honor for your country. Flapjack, while the bugle calls to attention, you will raise the flag of American freedom on high, and each boy will repeat the salute to Old Glory.

(*Boys line up, salute, bugle sounds, the flag is raised.*)

ALL (*pointing to flag and speaking slowly in unison*). "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the republic for which it stands; one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

ALL (*sing*):

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Long may our land be bright,
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by thy might,
Great God our King.

SLOW CURTAIN.

Mrs. Tubbs of Shantytown

By WALTER BEN HARE.

Price, 25 Cents

Comedy-drama in 3 acts; 4 males, 7 females (5 are children). Time, 2¼ hours. **Scene:** I interior. **Characters:** Mrs. Tubbs, the sunshine of Shantytown. Miss Clingie Vine, her lady boarder, real genteel. Mrs. Hickey, a neighbor who hates gossip. Maydelle Campbell, the young school teacher. Simon Rubbels, the corner grocery man. Tom Riordan, the census taker. Queenie, aged twelve. Methusalem, aged eleven. Billy, aged seven. Victoria, aged three. Elmira, aged ten.

SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—Mrs. Mollie Tubbs and her happy little family in Shantytown. The pretty, young school teacher and the Census Taker have a disagreement. Mrs. Tubbs as first aid to Cupid. Mrs. Hickey expresses her opinion of Simon Rubbels. Miss Clingie Vine has her census taken. "My maw was a Virginia Hamm, and whenever we had company, papaw always wore full evening garbage." Bad news from Kansas. "There ain't no way too far for a mother's love. I'm going to my boy."

Act II.—A month later. Mrs. Tubbs returns. Simon Rubbels decides to find a wife. "If he ain't a red-headed hippopotamus, there never was one on this green earth." A Shantytown high jinks with song and menagerie. Clingie Vine decides to be a siren. The light in the window for Jimmie. "I've got my babies, and I've got their love, and all the money in the world can't take that from me, so Mr. Simon Rubbles, the honorable Mrs. Tubbs respectfully declines your offer of matrimony."

Act III.—A Shantytown Thanksgiving. Mrs. Hickey brings the news and Miss Vine inherits a fortune. Mr. Rubbels worries Mrs. Tubbs again. "You kin turn me out in the streets tomorrow, but tonight this house belongs to me. Now there's the door and there's your hat. I won't detain you no longer." Miss Vine and the good looking grocery boy. "Jimmie, my boy, my boy!" The return of the Prodigal Son. "I reckon I'm the happiest woman in the United States of America. My cup runneth over, my cup runneth over!"

MRS. TUBBS SAYS:

"Clingie's certainly a long time makin' up her mind, but when she's sot a steam shovel himself couldn't unset her."

"I hope and I trust, and when a person hopes and trusts fer a thing they ginerally git it. Everything is bound to come out right some time."

"I ain't goin' to worry. There ain't no use in h'istin' your umbrella until it begins to rain."

"I jest do what I have to do and make the best of it. Mr. Tubbs used to say that my voice would scare anything, so I jest try to make it scare the blues."

"Bibulous? Bibulous, Theodore Tubbs, bibulous? Why, mister, that man didn't know no more about the Bible than my sister's cat's tail. And what's more, I ain't got no sister.

"Men is men the hull world over, and it seems jest like it's a man's nature to do that which they oughtn't to do, and to leave undone them things they ought to have did. That's Scripture."

"What difference does money make? If you've got your youth and your strength and your love, that's worth all the money that was ever made in this whole world."

"Love your country and stand up fer it to the last ditch. Poor folks can love their country jest the same as rich ones. And better."

"Keep smiling."

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